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THE SPHERE, JANUARY 23, 1943
With which is incorporated "BLACK & WHITE" 1/6

THE SPHERE

Vol. CLXXII No. 2244 WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED THE GRAPHIC JANUARY 23 1943

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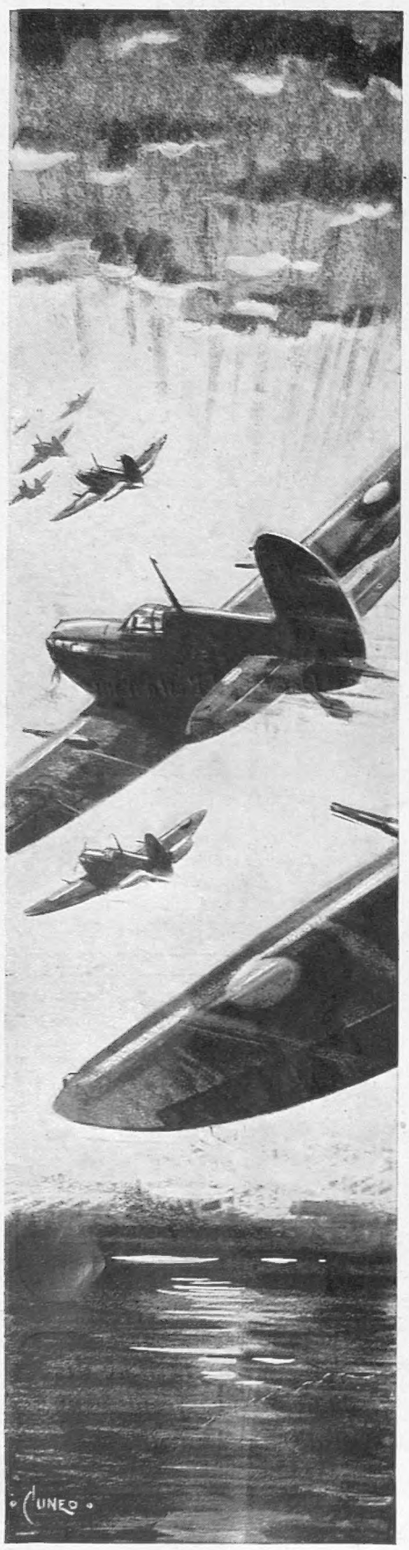
the glory on their wings



Night raids . . .
Daylight raids . . .
Intruder raids . . . into
the dawn—across the
bars of sunset,
through rain and storm.
BUT . . . whatever the
weather—
cloudy or clear
there is always . . .
always a glory
on their wings
for they go to avenge
the innocent,
to break the tyrant,
to release a continent
from slavery . . .
to save mankind.
No enterprise more
glorious in the
story of the world.
Once they were few,
now they are many—
they must be more—
more—and still more,
until only *they* darken
the new dawn . . .
and their tenuous
shadows are the
only darkness
on the fields . . .
and tents . . .
and towns of Europe.
MORE . . .
still MORE.

* * * *

Until this glorious consummation is achieved, we on the civilian front cannot pause or relax. However hard we work, however much we deny ourselves, however much we save from our earnings, our best must be counted short of our needs until Victory is in our grasp. . . . Are you sure that you are saving ENOUGH?

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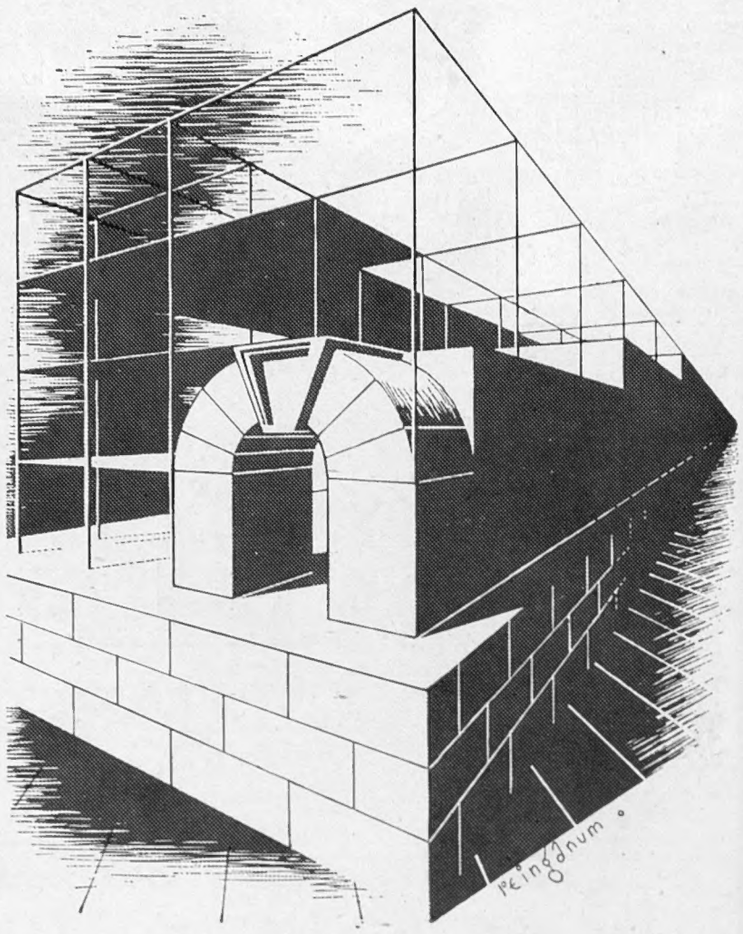

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Volume CLXXII No. 2244 The SPHERE, London, January 23, 1943

THE SPHERE
With which is incorporated "THE GRAPHIC"
The Empire's Illustrated Weekly

THE GIRLS WHO ARE NOW AIDING IN THE ANTI-AIRCRAFT DEFENCE OF LONDON REVIEWED BY THEIR COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, GENERAL SIR FREDERICK PILE, in the new warm winter clothing with which they have just been issued

On Sunday night last London's long spell of immunity from bombing was broken when German aircraft again raided the capital, as a reprisal for the R.A.F. bombing of Berlin. Women are now playing their part at night, as they are now an integral—and important—part of the anti-aircraft defence system of London. Some of them are working on gun sites, and others are manning the Balloon Barrage. To help them during the cold nights of winter, those members of the A.T.S. attached to the guns have just been issued with new warm winter clothing. This includes smocks made up from "Teddy bear" material, with wide sailor collars which unhook to form protective hoods; and sea-boot stockings and white shearling gloves. A few days before Germany's renewed offensive on London, some of the girls in the London area were inspected by General Sir Frederick Pile, G.O.C.-in-C., Anti-Aircraft Command, and General Sir T. S. Riddell-Webster, Quarter-master-General. The picture reproduced above was taken on that occasion: General Pile is the foremost figure.

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A WAR NEWSLETTER —No. 177

1, NEW OXFORD STREET, W.C.1.

The Nelson Touch.—The epic story of the latest Arctic convoy to Russia which is coupled with the names of Sherbrooke, and of the *Onslow* and the *Achates*, may rank in history in that unbroken chain of epics of the sea which from Tudor times to the present day adorn and point the moral of British sea power. It is early days yet to speak of the decline in sea power, the decreasing importance of warships so long as such epics as these are possible and are achieved. When, in the crisis of merchant-ship losses, a large convoy can get through the most dangerous seas without the loss of a single merchant ship or a ton of freight, thanks to the courage and initiative of its naval escort of little ships, facing a squadron of enemy capital ships and cruisers, it is not yet the time, and it is no time, to speak of the decline in importance of sea power. I doubt whether even our enemies, declared or undeclared, would think it worth while to "announce" any decline in the fighting spirit of our silent service, any loss of the Drake or the Nelson or the Beatty or the Keyes touch. It pays to be the *silent* service; the glory of our Navy is revealed more loudly and more gloriously in such epics, squeezed out, often after long delay, in brief, curt Admiralty communiqués of "business done," than in all the staged showmanship of the microphone or by the coloured inks of special correspondents. The language of action should be terse and simple, like the literature of Arctic exploration. "They did their duty" is a sentence more packed with superlative and colour than any showmanship or purple passage can compass—the Navy and the Merchant Navy have no need of publicity agents, no need of boast or boost or brag.

"Changes His Tune."—It is natural enough that, with a new year of war (the fourth), the public should seek anxiously amid the daily mass of documented evidence (and wishful thinking) for proofs which it can accept as *solid and irrefutable* that the Evil Man, who alone could have prevented this universal tragedy, is shaken; or at any rate is no longer convinced of victory for the Reich, and has become dubious of the potency of his own star, destiny and omniscience. Under normal conditions, the sifted evidence would be adequate to convince most people that Hitler is indeed *shaken*. But conditions are not normal, nor are the minds of men. The Nazi menace is not reduced *until the German people realise that Hitler is shaken*. It is as clear as evidence can prove that Hitler, if shaken, still believes that his words can persuade his own people to accept as truth anything he wishes them to believe. One sentence from his last public utterance is sufficient to cite: "The British bombing raids on Germany have taught Germany how to hate." The man who can say that in 1943, and the nation which can accept it, are still formidable, still united as master and faithful slaves, still strong and terrible in the possession of that "shortness of memory" which can forget Rotterdam, London, Coventry, etc., etc. We must justly reject masses of normally well-proved evidence, in the knowledge that we are dealing with a tyrant and a nation still capable of believing that the Democracies wanted war, started the war and initiated night-bombing in 1942 as a new weapon of hate. But, fortunately for us, Hitler, though an inspired actor, is not proof against dramatic criticism, which is never more shrewd than when it emanates from pit and gallery, on which the success of a play depends.

THE LORD MAYOR GIVES A LUNCHEON TO AMERICAN OFFICERS OF COMBINED OPERATIONS: A group of the guests from the Headquarters Staff with Sir Samuel and Lady Joseph

In this picture are seen the following: in the front row, from left to right, are—Commander Elliott Strauss, U.S.N., son of Admiral Strauss, and Naval Member of H.Q. Staff; Captain Hewlitt Thebaud, U.S.N., Assistant Naval Attaché; Sir Samuel Joseph, Lord Mayor of London; Vice-Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten, Chief of Combined Operations; the Lady Mayoress; Colonel Harold D. Campbell, U.S. Marine Corps, Marine Member, H.Q. Staff and well-known marine high-speed pilot; Captain John O. Huse, U.S.N. Naval Member, H.Q. Staff; Commander W. R. Hollingsworth, U.S.N., Assistant Naval Air Attaché. Behind are the following: Major Gilbert W. Embury, U.S. Army, Army Member, H.Q. Staff; Lieut.-Colonel Ralph A. Dutton, U.S. Army, Signal Member, H.Q. Staff; Lieut. R. L. Terrell, U.S.N.R., Naval Member, H.Q. Staff (head partly shown); Colonel Claud E. Stadtman, U.S. Army, U.S. Advisor on Combined Operations; Lieut. John Mortimer Schiff, U.S.N.R., representing Admiral Stark's Staff (head hidden behind Lord Mayor); Colonel Dwight Hughes, U.S. Army, Assistant Military Attaché; Lieut. C. R. Evans, U.S.N.R., Naval Member, H.Q. Staff; Lieut. R. G. Cleveland, U.S.N.R., Naval Member, H.Q. Staff; Keith White, U.S.N., Civilian Technician with H.Q. Staff; Lieut.-Com. G. W. Stevens, U.S.N.R., H.Q. Staff; Mr. Robert Seeley, U.S.N., Civilian Technician, H.Q. Staff

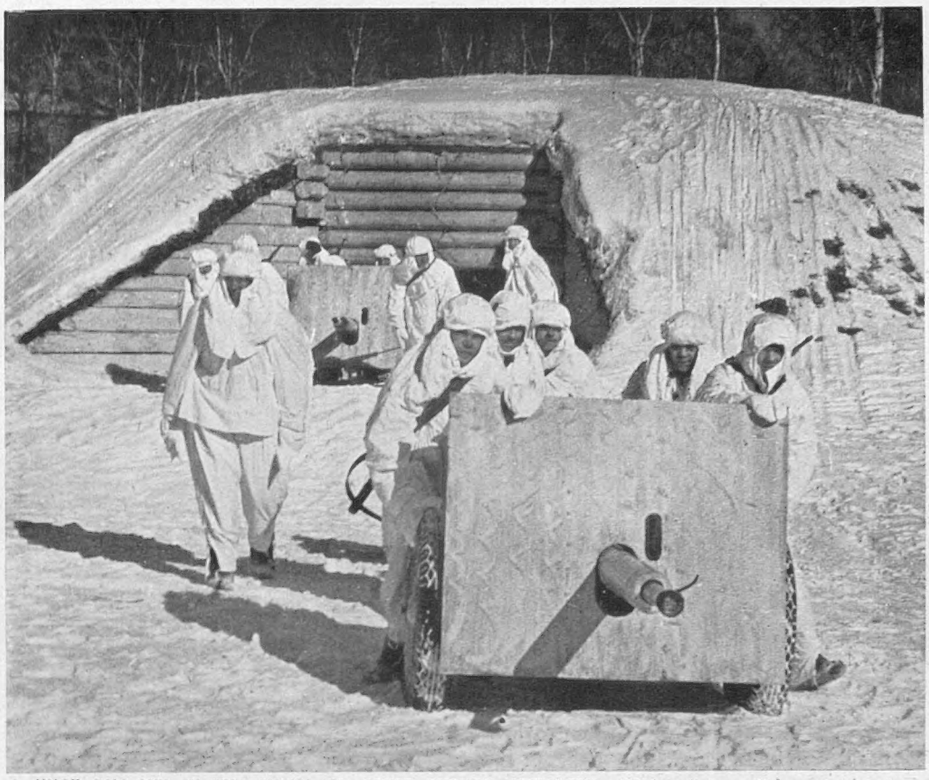
If the Germans are the stallites, muzzled by fashion and a vociferous propaganda, the Allies are the gods and pittites, and can see through the grease-paints and the Press-notices. And, as such, we can reasonably bank on a part at least of the available mass of evidence. We need go no further than Hitler's own words in his war addresses to his own nation. In his last two or three speeches he has revealed his mind quite unmistakably. We are right to attach no importance at all to his inconsistencies, his readings of history, his boasts, his justifications and self-justifications. But by two very new notes we may fairly set great store. "The possibility of defeat" and "the determination of Germany to resist it to the last man" are the two keynotes in these latest speeches. You may search his public utterances since 1939 for any hint at such a possibility before this autumn. Clearly to-day, his mind, for ever toying with historical parallels, is in the mood of Germany in August 1918, when defeat stared the Kaiser and his generals in the face.

Worth Trying? Plain Sense?—The most fervid persecutor of war *à outrance* to victory and beyond—to permanent peace and permanent decency for all humanity—has lucid intervals when he realises that the evils of war are so flagrant that they make a nonsense of a double-barrelled aim. With all your will, your sweat, your hate propaganda, and with the sacrifice of all the best of your potential leaders in the difficult years of reconstruction, you forge victory in war. But for winning the still more difficult ascent to peace and decency, you will need *all* your will, *all* your sweat, *all* the best of your potential leaders in the ranks of youth daily wasting away, and must undo painfully all the hate you are building up. Winning the war and winning the peace are not one but two causes, mutually destructive, mutually antipathetic. The wastage of the war of 1914-18 was, by general admission, a prime cause of the blind, selfish, demented lull which divides the Thirty Years War—and links it as one nightmare. In lucid intervals, we realise that every day this war continues makes harder the only victory worth winning—security and decency in human relations. It is a hard thought, but it is not disputable in logic. It is clear now to many that the damnable slogan: "Time is on our side," used by each side in turn, is a desperate chimera. In war time is never on any part's side. War is all evil, all destructive; it is the destroyer of the peace gone and the peace to be. Every day knocked off the length of a war is a day gained for humanity. The mental and physical suffering, the loss of irreplaceable treasure, already caused by this war, are so tremendous that no fog of war can still blind the eyes of any people of any country—even the last to be converted—in temporary phases of victory or set-back, to the fact that, win or lose, war is sheer dementia and universal doom. It was forced on the Allies by madmen, and the Allies would be doubly madmen if now they compromised or cooled off or failed to exact the supreme penalty from the guilty. But to-day the appalling logic of the evils of war suggests that the time has come to reconsider the employment of one at least of our war weapons—propaganda. *Is it plain sense, is it worth trying*, to direct that weapon of hate against the most guilty minority and to point it in the scabbard of reason towards the guilty, but less guilty, peoples of the Axis? I believe it to be both sense and prudence. I believe that from now onwards our propaganda should be conceived and put out in this dual form. We should give up threatening with wordy death and punishment hereafter (even as we bomb them to hell, as we must) the German people, and give up jeering at the weakness and cowardice of the Italian people, and we should at least try whether a more sober and reasonable campaign of wordy argument addressed to these peoples (as peoples not beyond redemption) might not yet induce them to hasten their (one day) inevitable duty of disowning and handing over to justice the criminals who misled them and plunged the world in blood. One thing is quite certain. Before we can "win the peace," we have got to hold out again the hand of reason, and even of fellowship, to these enemy peoples, guilty and slavish as they have proved themselves to be, and re-educate them into the circle of decent nations.

Shillinglee.—Shillinglee Park was "in the news" only a short time before it was destroyed by fire. It housed many records of the Turnour family (formerly of Suffolk), and among them some old legal documents which threw possible light on the parentage of William Caxton, a subject which is still a lively "correspondence column" counter. A pleasant house, not much noticed in guide-books to Sussex. A house not too large to be workable (up to the Second World War and Economic Revolution), built after a pleasant model of a spacious age. Lord and Lady Winterton were living in the stable-buildings at the time, and I hope and believe that any valuable possessions and records remaining in the house were in a state handy for rescue. Many great houses to-day might well find in accidental destruction by fire the happiest solution (economically) of a problem hard to solve. But not, I should think, Shillinglee. Certainly this war has proved that owners are better curators of their houses than wartime tenants, be they military, educational or industrial bodies. Shillinglee was not a palace and treasure-house like Petworth, nor a document of social history and English craftsmanship like Up-Park (once for a brief period owned by the Turnour family), nor a vast monument in masonry like Arundel. It had none of the graceful environment of the Parks of Cowdray or Goodwood. But it was a pleasant, friendly house, mellow and dignified, and it will be sadly missed in the neighbourhood of Kirdford and Chiddingfold.

THE OLD STAGER

THE LATEST PICTURES FROM RUSSIA



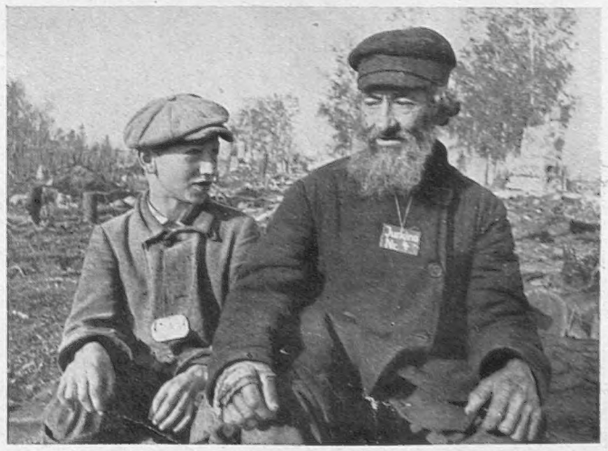
A HUGE DUG-OUT IN THE SNOW TO HOUSE RUSSIAN ARTILLERY. White-clad artillerymen are here seen bringing out their mobile guns from a huge dug-out at an outpost on the northern front. These posts are strongly constructed and they are invisible from the air : they afford safety and shelter for both crews and guns, not only from enemy shell-fire, but also from the icy weather of the Russian winter. Telephone communication brings the guns into action on any part of the sector within a very few minutes

A GERMAN OFFICER-PRISONER CONDEMNS HITLER. Flight-Major Hans Joachim Kittner addressing a meeting of officers and men in a Russian prison camp when Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union was strongly condemned

A VALUABLE PRIZE GAINED BY THE RED ARMY in the Middle Don offensive : A fuel dump abandoned by the Germans in their hasty retreat from Kantemirovka Station—part of a huge booty gained by the Soviet troops

RUSSIAN INFANTRY ADVANCING under the support of artillery against a village held by the Nazis. The buildings in the middle distance were soon stormed by the Red soldiers

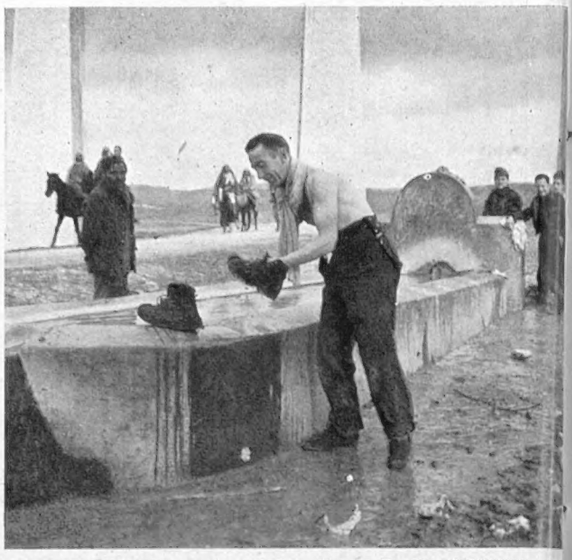
VILLAGERS GREET THEIR LIBERATORS. Survivors from families occupying a farm to the north-west of Stalingrad tell of their experiences after their village had been recaptured by Russian advance troops. Many hundreds of small townships and villages have already been liberated by the Red Army, freeing the peasant occupiers from a life of slavery



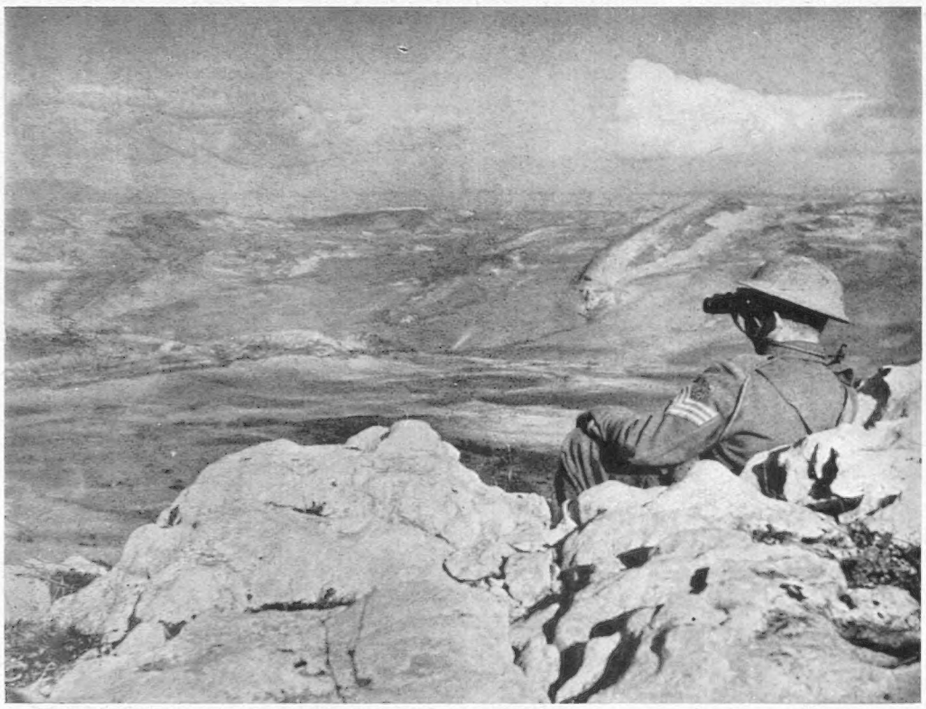
FROM THE VILLAGE OF YURKINO, in the Kalinin region. A seventy-six-year-old farmer, Ilya Andreevitch Kamensky, with his thirteen-year-old grandson, seated amid the remains of their village after the Nazis had been swept from their strong-point at this spot. The surviving villagers had been compelled to live in dug-outs, and these two are seen bearing the tags which the Nazis forced everyone to wear

SCENES WITH THE BRITISH FIRST ARMY IN TUNISIA

BRITISH PARATROOPS AFTER ONE OF THEIR EXPLOITS: These men have just returned from a "drop" on Depienne and are resting in the afternoon sunshine near Beja. Tough, well-trained troops of this type have been playing a large part in the Tunisian operations, as described in an article on pp. 110-111 of this issue



A PARATROOP SERGEANT BUSILY ENGAGED IN CLEANING UP after the Depienne sortie. He is Sergeant Frank Tucker, of Maidstone. A passing Arab stops to watch the sergeant's effort at the roadside horse-trough



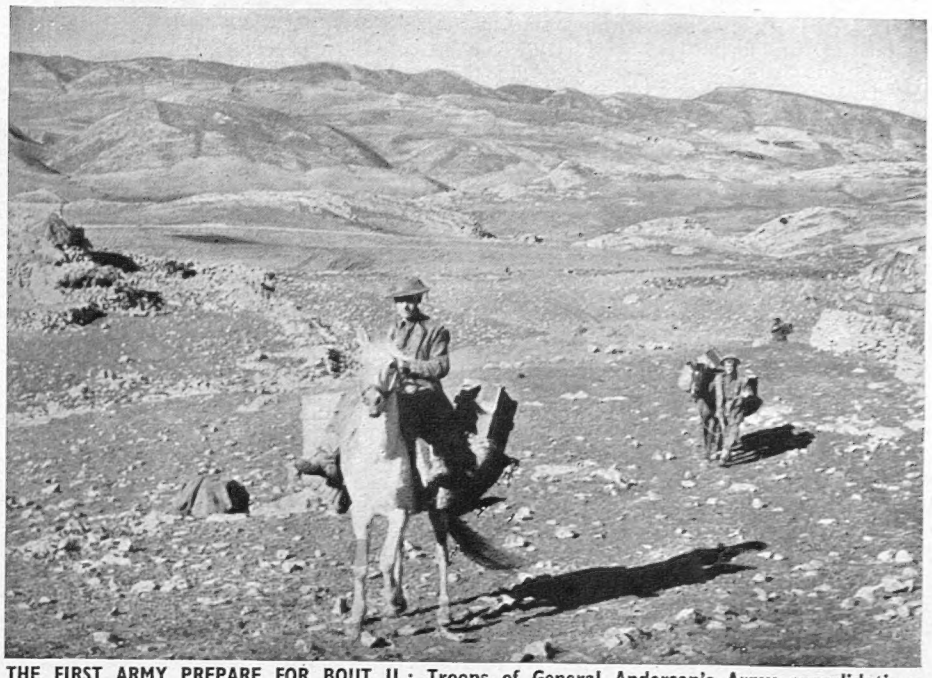
SERGEANT PRICE, WHO HAILS FROM HEYWOOD, observes the German-occupied town of Mateur from a hilltop. This town lies in a valley amongst the rocky hills: it has been the scene of some very heavy fighting during the Tunisian campaign

MEN OF THE ROYAL CORPS OF SIGNALS working on vital lines of communication. They are recovering cable which has been used to lay a line to the Northamptonshire Regiment. The two men are Corporal Willacy, of Loughton, and Driver Izzard, of Bow

MUD! RECOVERING A LORRY ON THE MEDJEZ EL BAB FRONT. Heavy rains have made the roads extremely muddy and very treacherous for traffic throughout the fighting area. A lorry which has skidded into a ditch is here being recovered with the aid of a Bren-carrier

A COMMANDING OFFICER OF THE LANCASHIRE FUSILIERS giving instructions to his officers for a patrol in North Africa

A BRITISH SOLDIER MAKES HIS WAY ACROSS THE HILLS ON PATROL through typical Tunisian terrain. The ground in this area is very stony, with little or no vegetation visible : all around rise the foothills of the Atlas range



THE FIRST ARMY PREPARE FOR BOUT II : Troops of General Anderson's Army consolidating, bringing up supplies and preparing for the coming battle. This party, with pack mules, are making their way up the hillsides to some of our advanced positions

MILITARY POLICE PATROL THE MOUNTAIN RANGES FOR AXIS STRAGGLERS : The British M.P.s are now organised into Provost Companies to carry out their extensive duties. A patrol, headed by Major Price, A.P.M., and assisted by a French officer and two French Military Police, travels through the rough mountain ranges between Tebrousouk and El Aroussa seeking German and Italian stragglers suspected of hiding there

A LONDON SERGEANT'S EXPLOIT IN THE TUNISIA FIGHTING : Sergeant Richard Sumner, a Londoner, is the hero of a remarkable feat. During an attack on German positions, he charged a machine-gun nest single-handed, capturing two twenty-year-old Nazis with their light machine-gun and 3,000 rounds of ammunition. Reporting to his Major, he was told to take the gun to a forward slope and hold down the enemy fire. The gun jammed, but Sergeant Sumner " persuaded " one of the prisoners to adjust it—and held the position until all his ammunition had gone

THE TWO BRITISH SERGEANTS SEEN HERE LIVED FOR THREE WEEKS IN THIS GUN POSITION : They are part of a 2-pounder, anti-tank gun section. A German machine-gun captured by a patrol is seen in the background

ARMOUR CONQUERS the SAHARA

The March of General Leclerc's Fighting French Force from Chad up to the Tripolitanian Fighting Zone. Described by FERDINAND TUOHY

GENERAL LECLERC'S march up from Chad to menace the fortified zone of Tripoli, some 1,500 miles north of his Fort Lamy starting-point, would have furnished, in any but this monster conflict, a daily front-page story of high war adventure. One can visualise the special correspondents pounding it out under a Sahara date line :

" From the G.O.C. in his lorry headquarters to the wildest-looking *méhariste* on his camel, this astonishing expedition abounds in the picturesque. Take General Leclerc himself. At the outset of the war he was an unknown, thirty-nine-year-old cavalry captain. Wounded in catastrophic June 1940, he managed to break away from his German captors and, cycling into the unoccupied zone, was soon on his way to offer himself to de Gaulle, in London. Spotting a winner, the General made Leclerc a major, and sent him to try and rally French Equatorial territory. Success here was followed by Leclerc's promotion to command the Chad, where he at once set about organising a trans-Saharan expedition which was timed so well, or luckily, that it entered the Kufra Oasis, south of Benghazi, as Wavell was careering towards that port in his first offensive.

GENERAL LECLERC, whose real name is not Leclerc at all ! He is forty years of age and one of the youngest Generals in the world. He has adopted his present name so that his family (still in France) should not be victimised by the Nazis. At the fall of France he was a Captain : General de Gaulle sent him out to the Cameroons as a Colonel after his escape when France was invaded : to-day he is " Commander-in-Chief of the French Fighting Forces in the Chad "

" Leclerc was given the French Order of Liberation and the D.S.O. Vichy showed its appreciation of his worth by sentencing him to death. He made a second dash north last year, to coincide with Auchinleck's operations, and when these failed, Leclerc again took the sand back to Chad—with the fixed intention of moving north in greater force when the British entered anew into their stride. And, behold, here he now is, this dashing and daring military discovery. . . ."

" Chad-Force," as we should call it, could never have come into being without the decision of the coloured Governor, Eboué, to join de Gaulle in August 1940, first in the Empire to do so. Bearing in mind General Mangin's dictum that " he who holds Chad, holds Africa," the Free French began feverishly to throw together a defence force. They knew that Axis—especially Mussolini's—strategy aimed at this vital African cross-roads, and sure enough, the Germans presently pressed Weygand to turn the North African Army in the direction of Fort Lamy. Weygand always refused to set Frenchmen fighting Frenchmen, and so Lamy escaped. It then consisted of little more than a fort, an airfield and an assortment of bungalows and huts ; it was cut off for half the year from neighbouring Nigeria and the Congo—in fact, there is little doubt that the Chad capital would have fallen to a determined attack.

Instead, Fort Lamy was destined to emerge not only as Leclerc's main base, but as key-point of the Allied supply lines across Africa, stretching from the Atlantic to the Red Sea. Motor roads now run east, west and south. The first and most urgent road that had to be built was over 400 miles of uninhabited marsh and scrub to Kano railhead, in British Nigeria. To avoid flooding during the deluge season, this highway had to be raised most of the way, and it took 15,000 sturdy natives eighteen months to complete the job. Now Leclerc gets his war material and supplies over this road, and over a secondary route from Duala, on the coast. Less urgent supplies are rafted down the Shari River to Lamy.

Twice as big as France, the Chad has under 1,500,000 population. Vast tracts are uninhabitable desert. But elsewhere, on hills and plateaux, the climate is invigorating for Equatorial Africa, and the inhabitants are able to get along as farmers and by fishing in Chad. This lake is something of a phenomenon. Between its maximum period in mid-December and its minimum in mid-July it subsides by 50 per cent. This seasonal change is largely explained by the shallowness of the water, which nowhere is much more than six yards deep. At its largest the lake covers over 4,000 square miles, and it holds a hundred different sorts of fish. But when it shrinks, it leaves miles and miles of steamy swamp.

Fort Lamy lies 75 miles from the lake, but Vichy eyes were able to watch Leclerc's preparations from West African territory which fuses with the Chad. Vichy motor patrols went out from Zinder. At the end of October last, they reported the concentration north of the lake of " forces, mainly of Americans and Fighting French, with a powerful air force and a wealth of tanks, guns and tractors." Immense reserves were being built up at the bases " and along the lines of march, which follow three caravan routes," while a sufficient mass of transport was being formed " so as to make the days north within ten days."

What is certain is that Leclerc arrived in Libya in much greater force than on former occasions, and that he made the first crossing of the Sahara in mechanised strength without impairing his mobility as he approached journey's end, the coast of the Mediterranean. It must all be so very galling for Roman braggarts of other days, whose design it was to do just as Leclerc has done—only in the opposite direction. In 1936, they were full of it in Rome, and of how Balbo intermittently flew as far as the Tibesti range, planning the route of advance southwards. When you mentioned that worst foe of mechanisation, the desert dune, they gloated over Graziani's reduction of Kufra in 1931. That wonder (he took 7,000 camels, 300 lorries, 20 planes and armoured cars to tackle the nomad defenders) would be repeated on a grandiose scale. Well, now it has been, but by a Frenchman.

In the past, it took Leclerc a month's march over the worst terrain to reach Libya. Caravan routes, having water, had to be followed, however winding, and two routes were known to traverse the Niger Colony and the Tibesti mountains. The General has described some of the hazards : the desert of all kinds of contours, and its dunes which can reduce motor traffic to an average of one mile an hour ; the camels so heavily charged that they have to be tugged along—an exhausting business ; the combating of terrific temperatures ; the forced marches to avoid the March-October deluges ; the malaria and dysentery ; and the particular difficulties of the flying men faced by burning days, bitter nights, sand-storms and bad maps.

" Under French cadres," Leclerc said recently, " you see old colonials, Norwegian hunters, Bretons, Parisians, natives of the Sahara, of Chad, the Cameroons and Congo. They all have this campaign in their hearts, feel it to be their property. They have trained themselves to it, so as to become expert and to stand the worst fatigue and thirst. They campaign under the motto ' Action, Sacrifice, Hope.' They look a fierce lot on the march. When we last moved north to Libya, and took a 150-mile short cut through Vichy West African territory, the Vichy outposts ranging the torrid desert had one look at us and hastily withdrew."

That Leclerc column was no doubt traversing the Niger Colony. The main part of " Chad-Force " seems this time to have gone by the Tibesti on account of the sure amount of water to be found in the Borku depression. The Tibesti rise to 14,000 ft. and form one of the wildest and least-known regions remaining in Africa. Its few dwellers are poorly off, and Leclerc brought them food from far-off Lamy as an inducement to join up. And sure enough, natives of the Tibesti are mentioned in the communiqués as vying with the *méharistes* (camel corps) in striking terror into the Italian garrisons in the Fezzan. Brandishing swords and knives, parties have erupted out of the night, terrifying dazed Italians into swiftest surrender.

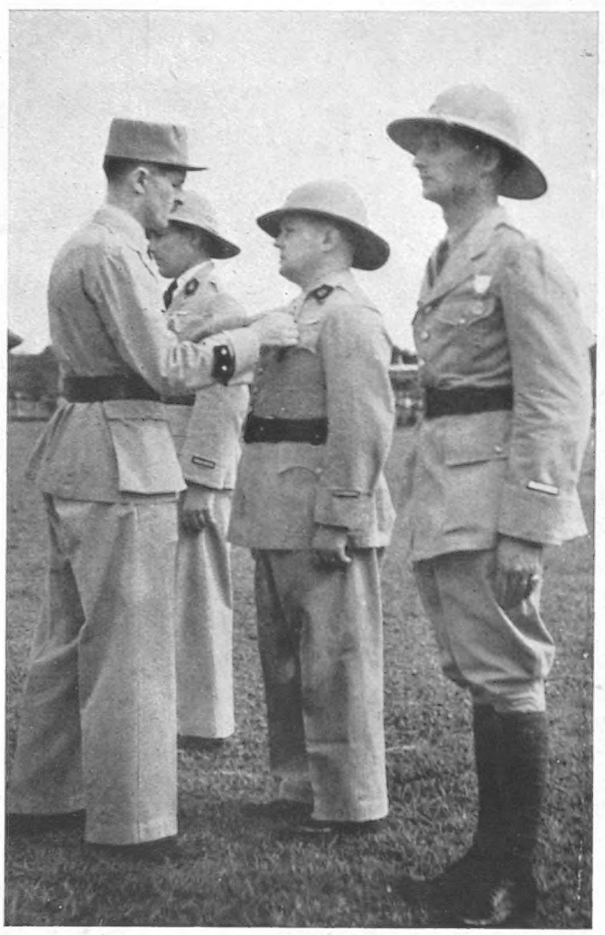
The Fezzan consists of a group of oases in several valleys, of which the chief are Murzuk, Sebha and Brach. Villages are many and close together, and the Italian post in each has to be dealt with. Over half of all the Arabs and Berbers in Tripolitania live in this Tripoli region. They are stouter stock than the Cyrenaicans and they feel for the Italians a smouldering Muslim hatred because of Graziani's past abominations, which included the concreting of water-holes and the dropping of chieftains on their native villages from aircraft. A French Lawrence might be able to do something with these Tripoli Arabs, and maybe the new Fighting French Governor, Colonel Delange, will have a try.

This is not the place to speculate on General Leclerc's immediate plans, but clearly one form of his co-operation with the Eighth Army may take the shape of harrying Rommel's coastal communications with Tunisia in a manner reminiscent of Lawrence on the Damascus-Medina railway. Those fierce *méharistes*, with their swords and knives and yells, assuredly conjure Lawrence's Arab levies. Another possibility is that Leclerc will be able to advance from Brach down a track that intersects the Wadi Zemzem, taking in flank Rommel's men who, at this writing, are thought to be preparing to stand in the Zemzem.

Leclerc has dealt with the Sebha airfield, but has still to reduce Murzuk. North-westwards are Giraud men playing the same terror tricks on Italian strong-points. In an area where communications get better as they approach the Tripoli armed camp, a few days' march separates the two French forces, and judging by the way the Italian garrisons are collapsing, it will not be they who will form an obstacle to a military junction that would enhance the prospects of a far more desirable political one.

While a meeting between Generals Giraud and de Gaulle hangs fire, their troops are fighting the same desert battle.

On each of the previous occasions that Leclerc appeared in the Fezzan he had to be ready to turn back those thousand and more miles in reverse to Fort Lamy. Now he may well have made other arrangements, keeping him in the north. If called for, a ready way of reinforcing him would be with Dakar Senegalese, who could cope with the Saharan climate better than most. The majority of the 60,000 troops in French West Africa, whose garrisons Giraud has just inspected, are Senegalese, for whom there is in being a rail-and-road transport system up to Fort Lamy. In an address at Niamey, Giraud spoke as if the army he is creating will spend all 1943 getting used to weapons which have out-dated those of 1940. But will the hard-bitten and well-trained Armée d'Afrique require all that time ?



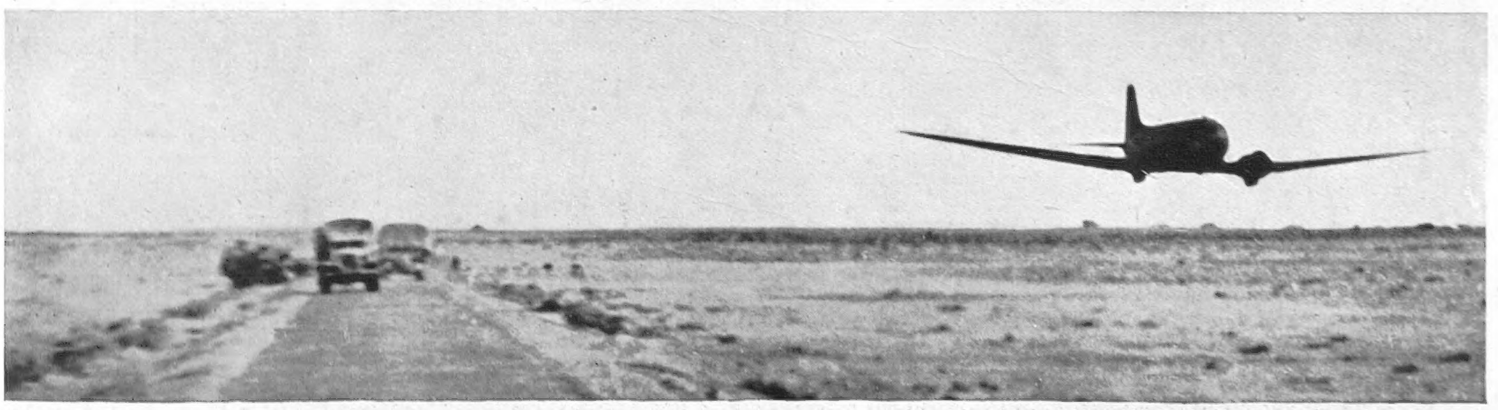
THE GENERAL DECORATES A FRENCH N.C.O. IN THE DESERT : The force he commands is now threatening Rommel's flank, after one of the greatest treks in military history—more than 1,000 miles across the desert from Chad to Tripolitania

The R.A.F. take over CAPTURED LIBYAN AIRFIELDS

STACKS OF ANTI-PERSONNEL MINES piled up at the edge of the airfield at Marble Arch, to the west of Jedabia. Working parties removed these from the landing-ground at this point before advanced R.A.F. aircraft arrived to take it over to continue their offensive against Rommel

ANTI-TANK MINES GATHERED BEHIND BARBED WIRE AT MARBLE ARCH: Step by step the R.A.F. have kept pace with the Eighth Army during its advance through Tripolitania in pursuit of the Afrika Korps. They have been taking over the airfields abandoned by the enemy at record speed; and from these our fighters and bombers have continued their work of striking ever farther into the lines of the retreating enemy. To keep these advanced aircraft supplied with petrol and ammunition, Special Transport squadrons have been taking up supplies to the front daily. How this important work has been carried out is shown by the official pictures reproduced on this page

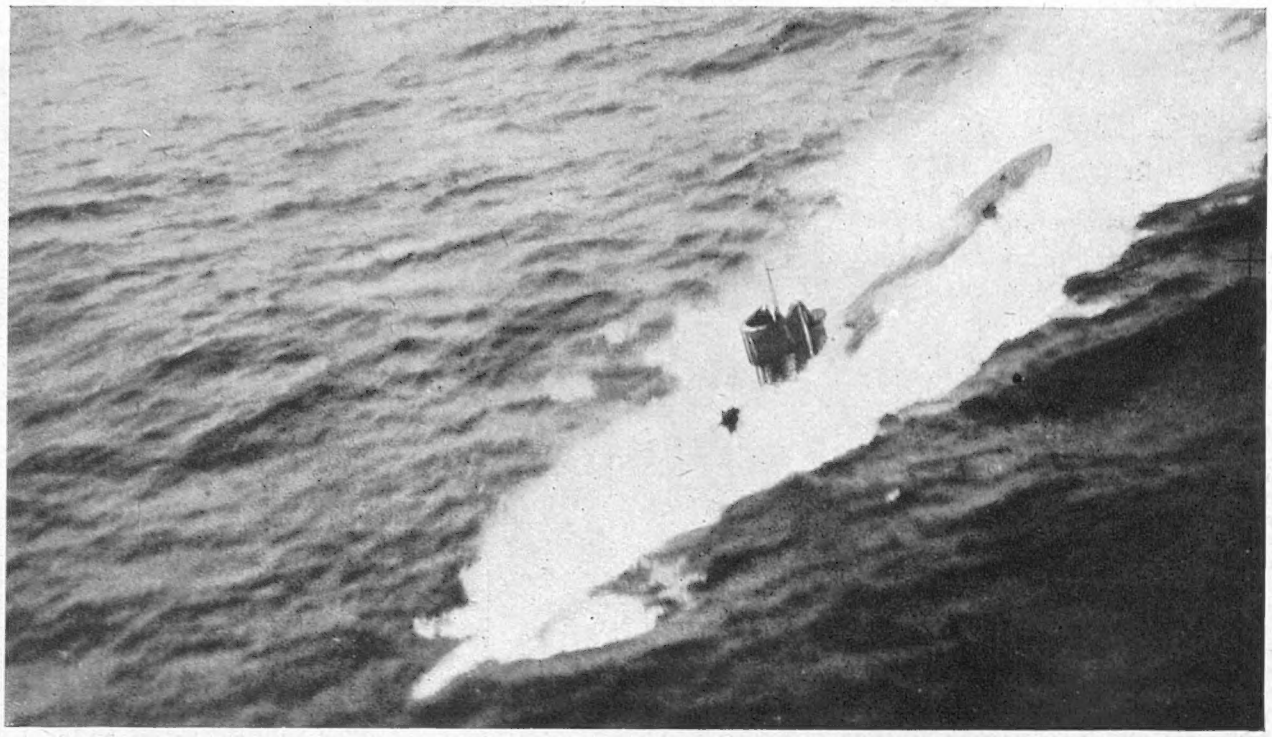
AN ENEMY AIRFIELD IS PREPARED FOR OCCUPATION BY THE R.A.F. Transport lorries have brought the working parties up to the spot, and the men are here seen filling up the craters caused by Allied bombers in an attack carried out only the night before it was occupied by our own aircraft. Within a few hours, our planes were successfully operating from this desert landing-ground



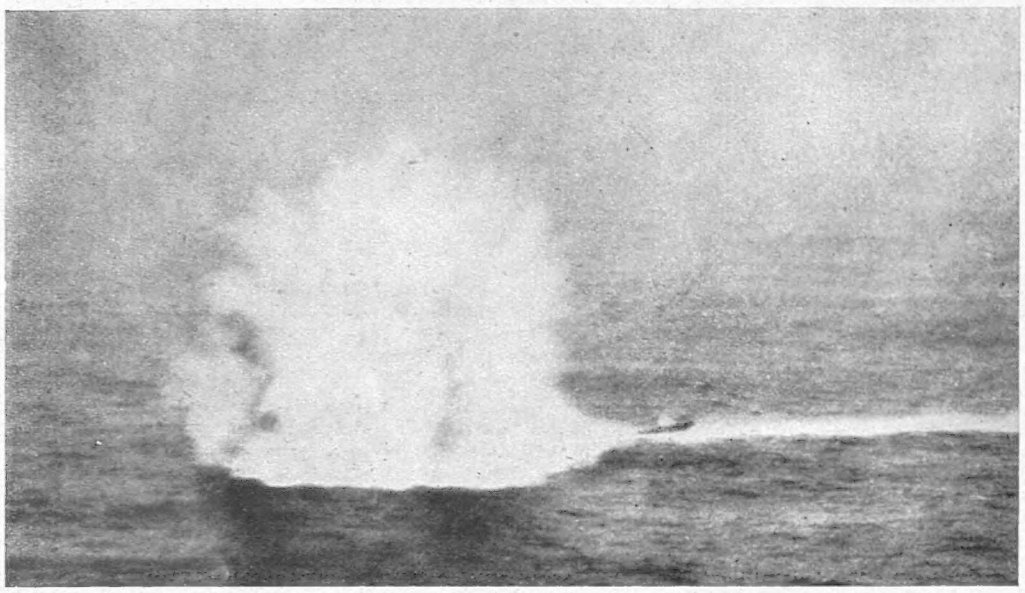
ON THE WAY UP TO THE FRONT WITH SUPPLIES FOR THE R.A.F. A transport aircraft flying low as it passes an Allied motor convoy on the desert road to the forward positions. The plane was taking up fuel supplies to newly-won landing-grounds in Tripolitania for the further pursuit of Rommel's broken columns

LIBERATORS versus A U-BOAT PACK

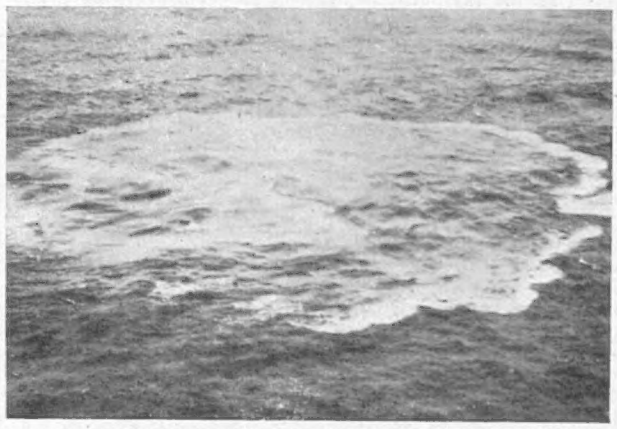
Two Liberator aircraft of the R.A.F. Coastal Command have just helped to break up and disperse a powerful U-boat pack which was massing to attack an important convoy from the United States to Britain during its passage across the Atlantic. In under nine hours the Liberators sighted thirteen U-boats and attacked eleven: two of them were probably sunk as a result; several others were damaged and the rest were forced to crash-dive with their torpedoes unlaunched. The convoy which the submarines sought to attack has now reached a British port. One of the ace Coastal Command pilots, noted for his attacks on U-boats—Squadron-Leader T. M. Bulloch, D.S.O. and Bar, D.F.C. and Bar—sighted eight of the submarines, and attacked seven of them. (Some days later the same pilot attacked another U-boat and blew it half out of the water.) The pictures reproduced here are from official Air Ministry photographs, taken whilst the attack on the convoy was actually in progress



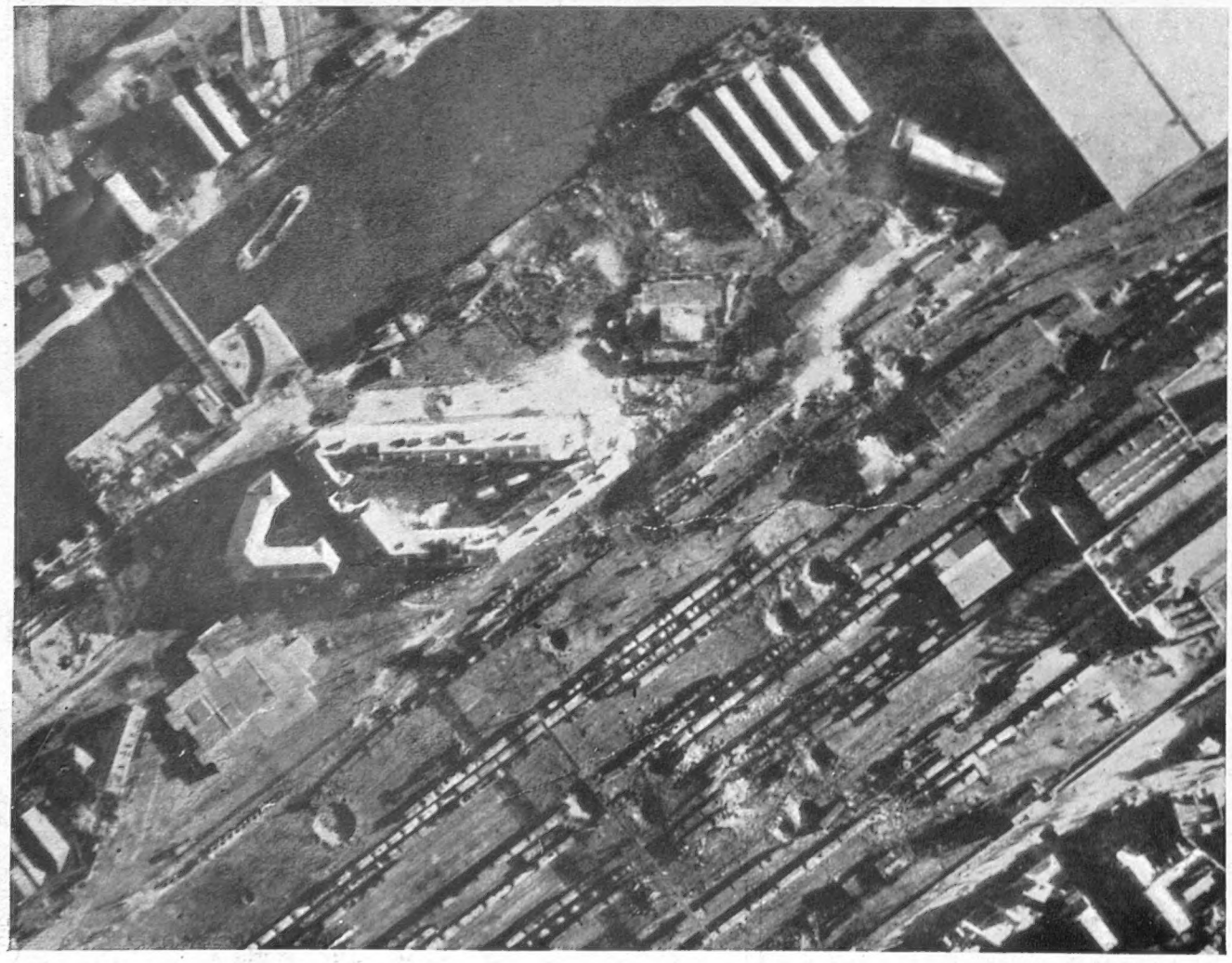
1. A U-BOAT OF THE "WOLF PACK" IN THE ACT OF CRASH-DIVING. The partially raised periscope and the foreward deck are clearly visible in this picture taken just before the vessel went down



2. ONE OF THE DEPTH-CHARGES EXPLODES in the region of the bows whilst the stern of the vessel is still above water. The U-boat is moving towards the left, as indicated by its wake



3. A PICTURE TAKEN FROM THE PORT SIDE OF THE LIBERATOR as it circled the spot which shows all that remained of the submarine after it was sunk by the Liberator—an oily scum on the surface of the water, with air bubbles rising in the centre



On left—**AFTER THE ATTACK ON ST. NAZAIRE by U.S. BOMBERS: A reconnaissance photograph which reveals the damage to the railway**

In daylight, on January 3, Flying Fortresses and Liberator bombers of the U.S. Army Air Forces based in Britain carried out a heavy attack on the port of St. Nazaire, in France. This was one of a series of raids carried out on that day, in which 300 fighters co-operated in attacks on enemy-held territory. At St. Nazaire bursts were seen on the targets and fires were started. The bombers were attacked by many enemy fighters and a long running fight followed: a number of enemy aircraft were destroyed and seven of the U.S. bombers were lost. The picture reproduced on the left, taken by a R.A.F. reconnaissance aircraft shortly after the attack, shows the damage among the railway tracks at St. Nazaire. There are sixteen craters visible, and these vary in diameter between approximately 50 ft. and 25 ft.: a number of trucks have also been destroyed or damaged. The goods station has suffered from blast, and smoke still rises from some sheds near the station

The War by Air

The RECOGNITION of AIRCRAFT

A Sidelight on an Interesting Subject of Modern Warfare

Described by
PATRICK HAMILTON

THE insignificant gun button on the control column of a modern fighter unleashes a fire-power at the rate of anything up to 3,000 lb. a minute. Any machine caught within range of such a blast is likely to disintegrate almost instantaneously.

"To press or not to press" consequently becomes a very vital problem for the fighter-pilot and air gunner. In a lesser degree it is also the haunting problem of every ground and ship-borne A.-A. gunner. Overwhelmingly the problem is solved not by colours or signals, but by the general "sit" (attitude of the plane while in flight), shape and size of the craft. The actual markings on the plane are the last items to be considered in view of the reputation of the enemy. German planes have been met with a faint Iron Cross in the middle of a variegated "roundel" (as the R.A.F. rings are called); others have the Swastika on the tail-fin almost obliterated by a vertical strip, after the fashion of Allied national markings. Or the unknown plane may signal, and hope that this will induce its quarry to delay opening fire for the precious initial second. In other cases, enemy planes have staged mock dog-fights, even shooting off a few bursts, either to cover their approach to a target, or to delude a lonely fighter into attempting a "rescue." Yet, in spite of all this, aircraft markings are by no means unimportant or uninteresting. Even as far back as the first appearance of the plane in action (during the Balkan wars of 1912), it was found desirable to paint the national flags on the underside of the wing. This was the method adopted by the Allies in the very earliest phase of the 1914 war, until it transpired that above a certain height the Union Jack could readily be taken for the Iron Cross, and *vice versa*. The tri-coloured roundel was then adopted—the French taking the sequence of colours as they appeared in the Tricolour, while we took the reverse order.

The legal basis for the original decision—to make the aeroplane one of the few instruments of war that openly proclaims its allegiance—is obscure. In any case, it probably weighed less than convenience. The usual authority quoted is the 18th Act of the Geneva Convention, which specifies that war "vessels" must clearly indicate the country in whose service they are, and the jurists apparently considered that an aeroplane was sufficiently analogous to a vessel to require the same treatment.

In the last war, as in the early days of this, the markings were frequently painted on the moving control surfaces themselves, ailerons and rudder. As speeds increased, it was found that many cases of flutter and other difficulties with controls arose from the fact that the weight of paint used in the markings was sufficient to upset the delicate balance of the designer's structure. Accordingly, no modern service machine ever has its markings on moving control surfaces; but always on the non-moving part of the wings, fuselage or tail-fin. The moving parts are covered only by the standard camouflage, the weight of paint in which is carefully calculated and allowed for in the design. The actual colour schemes, both of camouflage and of identification signs, vary not only with the class of machine, day and night bombers, fighters, Coastal Command, Fleet Air Arm, experimental and communication machines, but are also changed from time to time.

At a recent date, the standard scheme was substantially as follows: upper surface of wings, red and blue roundels; lower wing surfaces, red, white and blue roundels for fighters, communications and trainers only. The fuselage roundel is more standardised for all types as red, white, blue and yellow. The proportion of the lighter shades (white and yellow) is now rather less generous than formerly, particularly with bombers; it was probably found that the earlier proportions were rather too conspicuous.

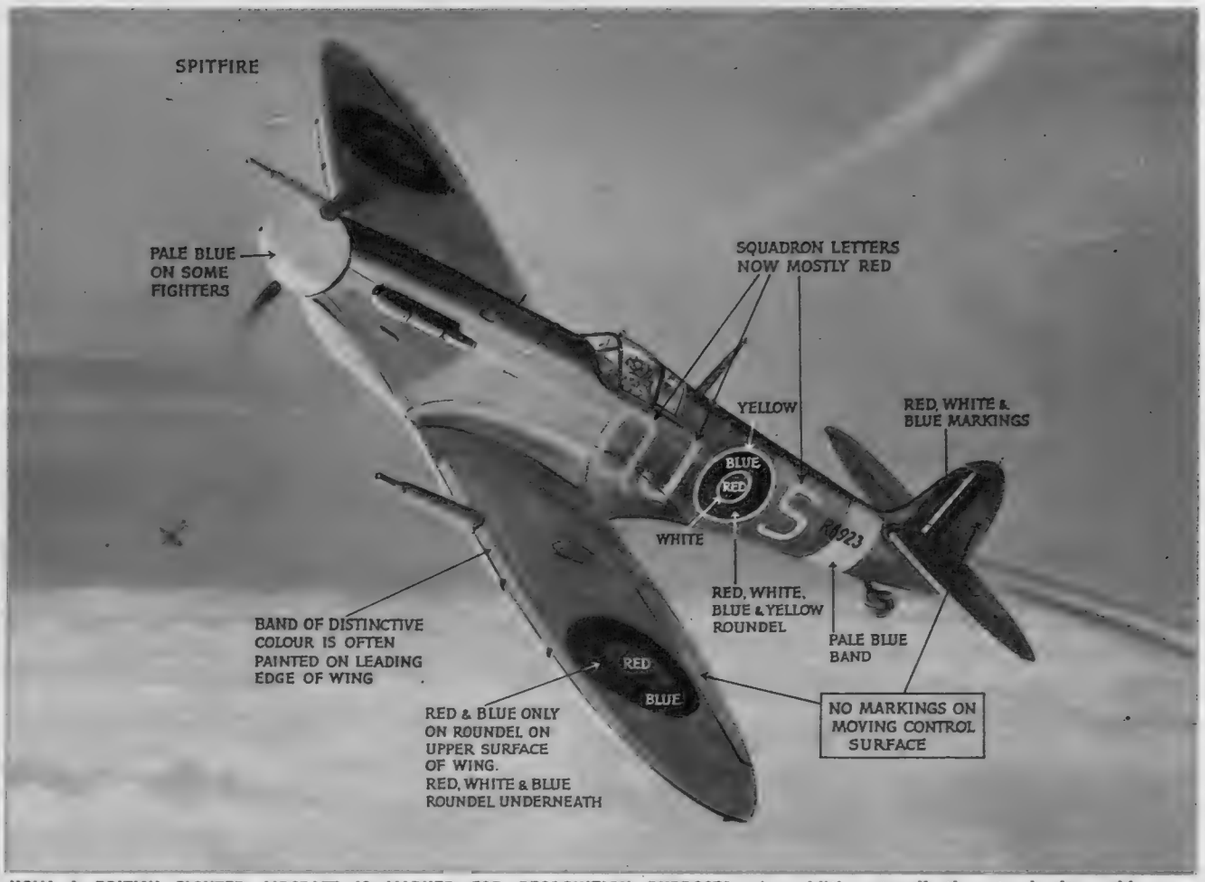
Squadron letters are now usually (though not invariably) painted in red, though some Coastal Command machines use grey, as do trainers and Army Co-operation machines.

The "nationality" strip on the tail-fin may be of red, white (or yellow) and blue, of widths which vary considerably. Other parts of the machine are frequently given distinctive colorations besides the wings and tail.

Some fighters, for example, have a pale-blue propeller-spinner and a band of the same colour on the fuselage. The leading edge of the wing is often painted a contrasting colour, such as orange-yellow, all obviously with the idea of increasing recognisability under "dog-fight" conditions.

Army Co-operation Command colour schemes sometimes dispense with the wing roundels, and have a broad band of orange paint in their place. The Walrus amphibian flying-boat is frequently seen with a band of pale blue at its wing-tips.

American Army Air Force markings are unique in that they are not symmetrical. On the lower side of the wings only the starboard wing carries a five-pointed white star on a blue disc. On the upper wing surface, only the port wing carries a similar star. A five-pointed star, on a blue or yellow or white surround (depending on whether the machine is a bomber, fighter or transport), is carried on the fuselage sides.



HOW A BRITISH FIGHTER AIRCRAFT IS MARKED FOR RECOGNITION PURPOSES: In addition to all the standard markings on wings, fuselage and tail, the forward edges of the wings (and sometimes the spinner) are painted in a special colour. This leading edge is the only thing which can quickly be picked up in certain circumstances—as in a dog-fight, for instance—*Drawing by Roland Davies*

A GIANT STIRLING BOMBER TAKING OFF FOR AN ATTACK ON GERMANY: The tail has come well up, and the wheels are beginning to lift as the bomber acquires forward momentum; in a moment or two the aircraft will become airborne. The recognition marks on fuselage and tail as shown here are no longer being used in the R.A.F.: the new versions are given in the drawing above

b

THE WAR BY AIR *(continued)*—Four Special "Sphere" Drawings

PIGEONS AS NIGHT FLYERS

Pigeons have a marked tendency to rest at night; but a few have shown capacity to fly in the darkness. The incident depicted in this drawing is described in the narrative given on the right

—Drawing by Roland Davies

On at least two occasions recently homing pigeons in the service of the R.A.F. were released after dark and arrived at their lofts next morning with messages from aircraft about to make a forced landing. Normally, pigeons do not fly after dark, but it may be remembered that the famous R.A.F. homer, Winkie, flew for at least one hour in darkness to reach land with her wings smothered in oil. She escaped from the bomber when it crashed into the sea, and struggled home to Broughty Ferry without a message. From her estimated flying speed the distance she must have travelled was calculated. The bomber's course being known, the area of search was limited, and within a short time planes had spotted the aircraft's dinghy with survivors aboard. It is supposed that when a pigeon is released over the sea in darkness the bird attempts to land, but after finding water below flies on in search of a perch. If it succeeds in reaching the coast the bird will wait there till dawn before flying inland. The pigeon's unwillingness to fly at night appears to be a matter of habit. Unlike such homing birds as the Manx shearwater, which has been observed to return to its nest from a great distance after dark, the pigeon is accustomed to roost at dusk. It may retain its sense of direction in darkness, but its ability to recognise its whereabouts appears to depend on sight. Any development of the pigeon's power of night flight would naturally make it a more useful messenger in war.

LOCKHEED LIGHTNINGS IN ACTION: "OUR PILOTS NEARLY FALL OUT OF THEIR AIRCRAFT LISTENING TO THE WISECRACKS"—*Drawing by Roland Davies*

The twin-fuselage Lightnings have been appearing in air combats over several widely separated areas of late. Here two are seen over North Tunisia, having come into contact with a Messerschmitt. "Our pilots nearly fall out of their aircraft listening to the American wisecracks in combat," said a British squadron leader recently. "The other day two Lightnings met a Messerschmitt. One manœuvred into position on the German fighter's tail. Our boys heard the other pilot say, 'Go ahead, superman, he's all yours!'" The fire-power of this new U.S.-built aircraft is stated to be terrific: they can rip a hole 3 ft. in diameter in an enemy plane when they secure a direct hit

THE WORK OF THE R.A.F. REGIMENT : AN ARMOURED-CAR PATROL SETTING OUT ON A DUSK PATROL AT A BRITISH AERODROME—*Drawing by Roland Davies*

The Unit Commander, in the leading car, is signalling to the other fighting vehicles in his troop before beginning his tour of the airfield. On the left the ground staff are making adjustments to a Boston bomber before an operational flight, whilst the two members of the crew prepare themselves for action : away on the right is another aircraft, neatly housed under an arched concrete roof to be out of the way should enemy bombers attempt a raid on the airfield. The R.A.F. Regiment—born only a few months ago—has already established itself as a very useful addition to our air strength. Both in Britain and in the various fighting zones overseas, the Regiment has been performing signal services

RESCUED FROM THE "SAND SEA"

A Hazard Which Awaits the Airman Flying Over the Libyan and Tripolitanian Deserts —*Drawing by Roland Davies*

In this drawing the damaged plane is a Liberator ; the rescuing aircraft are Douglas Dakota transport planes

Often when a forced landing has been necessary during the air fighting in conjunction with Eighth Army operations, the aircraft concerned has had to land somewhere on the belt of stony desert which stretches for hundreds of miles east and west from El Alamein to the Gulf of Sirte. The danger in this belt is the presence of gullies of varying depth which seam the desert at intervals. In certain lights, the shadows thrown by the sides of these gullies indicate their presence clearly enough ; but there are times of the day when they are, from the airman's point of view, badly lit. They have proved unwelcome "hazards." Another danger is the sand-dune proper. These dune areas lie to the south of the 30-mile stone desert belt in well-defined areas. They rise up in long, successive waves of golden sand usually running north and south, with troughs in between. A landing is only possible in such a trough.

The difficulties and dangers of the great sand-dunes are illustrated in the crash which is shown here. Describing the rescue, the pilot of the transport said : "I was leading a formation towards a forward area when, as we were passing over the great sand sea, the pilot of the machine on my left drew my attention to Very lights being fired from the ground. We flew low, saw a crashed machine, and landed near it."

The captain of the crashed machine said that the crew had water and rations for two days only, and were discussing their fate when the rescue party appeared. Six of the crew were standing around their crashed plane, but the seventh, an air gunner, had a nasty wound. The rescuing formation took the men to a landing-ground where there was a doctor, and within half an hour the gunner was receiving attention

THE HARBOUR AT RABAUL, IN NEW BRITAIN, PRINCIPAL BASE OF THE JAPANESE IN THE SOUTH-WEST PACIFIC. It was here that they recently concentrated the greatest armada ever for their first big Solomon Islands counter-attack on the Americans at Guadalcanar—*Drawing by Percy Home*

Rabaul Harbour has been figuring widely in the news ever since the invasion of the Solomons and New Guinea by the Japanese: it is their principal base in the South-West Pacific and pivotal point for all their operations within this area. The harbour itself is a wide, natural inlet of the sea at the north-eastern end of the island of New Britain. It is encircled with wooded hills and volcanic cones, backed by dense jungle of an especially poisonous character. The rainfall is excessive and, at times, volcanic dust settles on everything; but in spite of these disadvantages, Australia had spent much energy in enlarging the town and the harbour facilities.

There are now numerous piles and landing-wharves around the curving northern end of the harbour. Ships usually anchor in the central waters of the harbour when not tying up to a pier. The town has been laid out in rectangular blocks in the fashion of a modern city: there is a long, tree-lined central avenue running through the eastern side of the town, and another equally straight road serves the northern section. The avenue of trees, planted with meticulous accuracy, is the only outward evidence remaining of the German occupation of the island. There is a shore road running south to Kokopo, and another over the hills to Watam

THE ISLANDS WHICH FORM THE SOLOMON GROUP, showing the location of the new "secret" airfield built by the Japs at Munda, on New Georgia

Rabaul lies to the north-west of this group, the Australian mainland to the south-west. On Guadalcanar the U.S. troops have entrenched themselves firmly, beating off all counter-attacks by the Japs and maintaining their hold on the vital Henderson Airfield on that island. Presumably in order to make up for the loss of the latter, recently the Japanese began the construction of a new airfield—at Munda, on New Georgia Island. But its development was discovered by the U.S. Air Forces, and for five days on end it was hammered by Flying Fortresses and dive-bombers. The absence of enemy air opposition from this new base suggests that the Japs have not yet been able to make adequate use of it

FIGHTING IN THE SOUTH-WEST PACIFIC

In New Guinea, in the Solomons, and at the Jap Base at Rabaul—*Special Sphere Drawings and Diagrams*

JUST upon a year has passed since Japan seized Rabaul, the chief town of New Britain. It was on January 23, 1942, that waves of enemy bombers attacked the port, defended only by a small Australian garrison and five obsolete planes. The enemy was soon in full possession and has since used Rabaul as his key port for assemblage of convoys for attacks upon New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. Now the Japanese are getting some return of the type of warfare they employed on the Allies, for waves of American and Australian bombers are constant visitors to the harbour of Rabaul. A few weeks ago it was reported that a large amount of shipping had assembled in the spacious harbour, and some anxiety was felt in Australia as to the destination of the armada that was increasing as the days went by. Merchantmen, transports, cruisers and destroyers were gathering there in alarming force, so much so that Mr. Curtin appealed to Washington for more help, especially in planes. On Christmas Day Flying Fortresses flew from Guadalcanar to Rabaul (560 miles) and bombed the shipping there. Two days later Fortresses and Liberators made a night raid, wrecking four large ships, the largest (15,000 tons) being left lying on her side in the centre of the harbour, while the others were in flames. On the following night—December 28—low-level raids were made, under bad weather conditions. This time a large cruiser was hit and bombs dropped on the town area, starting fires. The last day of the year was signalised by yet another raid, when two large vessels received direct hits.

The heaviest and most effective of the Allied air attacks was made in daylight on January 5, when Flying Fortresses and Liberators appeared at noon and dropped low before releasing their heavy bombs. Nine ships are said to have been destroyed, and a tenth was probably also hit. Eight ships are described as medium-sized merchantmen, the ninth being a destroyer tender. When the harbour was seen later it was littered with sinking and blazing vessels. Heavy anti-aircraft fire was used by the enemy, from ships and shore batteries, and Zero fighters again tried to intercept the Allied bombers. Six of them were shot down, while one bomber was lost.

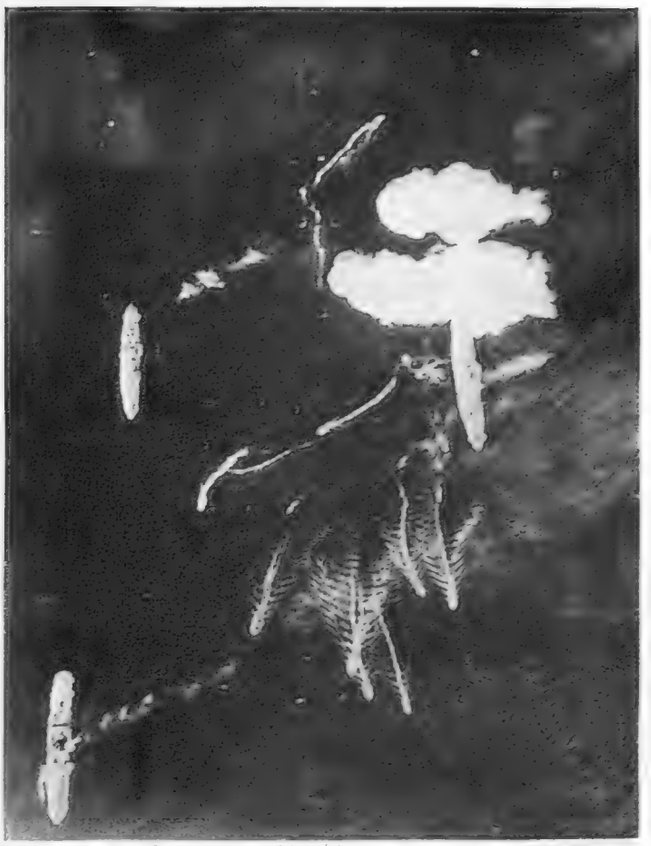
On the very next day, the determined enemy, undeterred by the severe losses at Rabaul, sent out a strong convoy to reinforce Lae, on New Guinea. Allied planes detected this convoy, consisting of two cruisers, four destroyers and four transports soon after it had started, when it was thirty miles south-east of Gasmata, the port on the southern coast of New Britain. This was on Wednesday evening, January 6, when an Allied squadron of Lightnings and a single Flying Fortress immediately attacked. The convoy was protected by fifty-four Zero fighters from Gasmata, but of these eighteen were soon shot down, and the Allied bombers devoted their attention to the transports. Three of these were sunk and the fourth received a direct hit. The fight went on throughout the night and continued all the next day as the enemy sailed on towards Lae. As the convoy drew nearer to New

THE CRUISER "SAN FRANCISCO" UNDER A WAR-DOTTED SKY OFF GUADALCANAR: The cruiser is in the right centre; on the left is a U.S. cargo transport. The picture was taken off Guadalcanar on November 12. On that day, thirty-three Japanese planes attacked the American convoy—and thirty-two of them were shot down!

Guinea, shore-based planes came out in support, and of these another twenty were shot down. Not much of the convoy reached Lae, and that was fiercely attacked the troops were disembarking.

It is obvious that Japan intends to hold on to her conquests at all costs. News from Australia tells of increased enemy activity in Timor; of the great energy displayed over the new aerodrome at Munda, in New Georgia; and of reconnaissance planes flown from submarines seen near Australia. The Allies have inflicted great losses upon the Japanese, but reinforcements can flow in, and the enemy has proved desperately difficult to overcome. The fanatical tenacity with which the Japanese have clung to Guadalcanar and to Papua demonstrate that the capture of New Guinea and of the key port of Rabaul will be tasks of great magnitude.

Rabaul has supplied the enemy with a good harbour, wharves, warehouses, adjacent airfield and suitable housing. It is protected from any land attack by sulphur swamps and a dense, Equatorial jungle. The Japanese have built an airfield at Cape Gloucester, at the extreme western tip of the long, narrow island. Along the whole length of the island runs a backbone of mountain range, the rest of the land, apart from some coco-nut plantations, being jungle of terrifying quality.



THE END OF A JAPANESE TROOP TRANSPORT: The big vessel on the right was conveying reinforcements to Guadalcanar when she received a direct hit from U.S. Flying Fortress bombs. As she lay burning, landing barges loaded with uninjured Jap soldiers darted away from the crippled hulk. The U.S. Air Forces have achieved a great number of successes in the South-West Pacific in this manner

IN NEW GUINEA: AUSTRALIAN TROOPS HAUL A BIG GUN THROUGH THE JUNGLE to attack the Japs in their last struggle to retain a foothold at Sananander and Buna. The fighting here has taken place under the worst possible conditions, both the terrain and the climate conspiring against the physique and staying powers of the white soldiers. In their progress over the muddy tracks of the Owen Stanley Range, the hardships encountered by the Australians were wellnigh incredible—*Drawing by E. Byatt*

WARFARE by PARATROOPS in TUNISIA

"Red Indian Warfare" by Airborne Troops, Commandos and "Tough Infantry" Patrols

FOR weeks now the communiqués from Tunisia have told of "Red Indian warfare." Paratroops, Commandos and "tough infantry" patrols have been carrying out scores of daring raids deep into enemy territory, spying out Axis dispositions, destroying Axis strong-points and transport, killing Axis soldiers and spreading chaos wherever they go.

What is the reason for this new type of guerilla warfare? Why are the powerful main forces of the Anglo-American armies not flung into a massive attack to drive the enemy into the sea?

There are several reasons. The first is transport. Roads from Algeria into Tunisia are inadequate and exposed to enemy air attack, and Royal Engineers are now rushing new roads to enable our main forces to come up to the front. The second reason is the lack of forward airfields, from which essential fighter cover can be given to our main forces when the big attack comes. At present, fighters from back airfields can spend only a few minutes over the front.

The third reason is weather. Torrential rains, which will come to an end in a week or two, have churned the black Tunisian soil into a morass into which tanks seek deep and which bogs even light cars. No major attack can be carried forward through such conditions. So for the time being activity is largely confined to patrols. The country, unlike the open, coverless desert of Libya, is suited to such patrols, which can infiltrate deep into the enemy lines without being discovered, or which can land from the sea or the air by night.

The *main* reason for such raids is not so much to cause damage or confusion to the enemy, but to bring back detailed information which will stand our main armies in good stead when their offensive is launched. British and American paratroops have been used lavishly since the first days of the Tunisian campaign. Paratroops flown all the way from Britain captured Algerian airfields, and then set out on their next task—the taking over of airfields deep inside Tunisia.

They dropped hundreds of miles ahead of our land forces and occupied many strategic airfields before the Germans could get at them. The French welcomed our men. Key towns in Tunisia were also taken by paratroops. One such town was occupied by British paratroops—most of them veterans of fifty drops, and most of them Londoners—who were flown in a huge convoy of American transport planes, escorted by fighters.

When the front became temporarily stabilised, with strong Axis forces in the Tunis-Bizerta area, our paratroops continued to operate. Early in December an airborne force, armed with automatic rifles and explosives, landed well behind the Axis lines without being discovered. They crept up to an Axis airfield, which was guarded with a tank screen and by infantry. Taking the enemy by surprise, they destroyed several of his tanks and smashed their way through to the airfield, where they blew up vital installations and destroyed planes on the ground.

Commando raids have been keeping Axis nerves on edge for many weeks. Recently, what was described as "the most

A BRITISH MAJOR BEHIND THE GERMAN LINES HIDES UP ALL DAY ONLY 300 YARDS FROM AN ENEMY BATTERY and watches them for a whole day : One of the exploits of "the Lost Unit" of North Africa, and one of the most remarkable fighting achievements of this war—*Drawing by Edward Osmond*

This Major from Yorkshire was second-in-command of the unit : he had twice before been reported dead on this front ! Three days before Christmas, the unit, with 55 mules, set out through the mud into the mountains held by the Germans. The Major, through slipping into a ravine, was left behind by the others : at dawn he managed to creep into a bush, less than 300 yards from a German battery, whose movements he observed all day. After running into German patrols, from whom he escaped successfully, the Major succeeded in regaining our lines at dawn on Christmas morning. The snowclad mountain scenery in the above drawing is typical of the country in the Atlas Mountains, where fighting is now going on in Tunisia

...essful Commando raid of the war" disorganised Axis supply lines for three days and spread havoc to within four miles of Bizerta. Several parties, each with a map reference of its operating area, set out with rations for five days under the command of a thirty-year-old colonel. Within twenty-four hours they had secured virtual mastery of 125 square miles of enemy territory. They straddled the main road from Bizerta to the front, destroying all enemy transport that came into sight. As a result, the Germans had to close the road, switching all traffic on to a long, roundabout route. The enemy was so nervous that he organised this traffic into convoys heavily protected by armour and aircraft. He also sent out powerful forces to catch our raiders. In this he failed. They returned four or five days later, having forced the enemy to dissipate his forces and waste his time and with a creditable bag of enemy killed and enemy transport and installations destroyed.

Several Commando raids have been made from the sea, directly on to enemy-held beaches. One Commando patrol landed from the sea near Bizerta in early December and penetrated inland, wrecking as they went. They captured an important road junction before which our main forces had been held up for some time, and also destroyed several Axis strong-points before returning on foot to our lines.

Later in the same month another Commando unit landed between Bizerta and Tabarca. It was a pitch-dark night; most of the men had to swim ashore and, unfortunately their 3-in. mortar was lost during the landing. But splitting into groups, they spread havoc through enemy territory. One group reached the outer suburbs of Bizerta. Another cut the Bizerta-Tabarca road, shooting up all Axis traffic, for forty-eight hours. Another attacked several strong machine-gun posts, and "though we killed quite a few Germans, the rest showed no inclination to come out and fight," as their C.O. said later.

Peter Liscomb

On left—**THE MIXED BRITISH AND AMERICAN COMMANDO which reached to within four miles of Bizerta, in action at an enemy road junction**—*Drawing by E. Byatt*

The most successful raid of the war by a Commando unit lasted for three days : during its course, Axis supply lines in Tunisia were disorganised ; mastery over an area of more than 125 square miles of enemy territory was temporarily secured ; and a point only four miles from Bizerta was reached ! The force consisted of British and American troops, and was commanded by a thirty-year-old Colonel. For five days they were absent from their base, and at the end of this time they returned to the rendezvous exhausted, owing to scanty rations. They landed from the sea, and each party maintained constant contact by semaphore and wireless with each other and with their headquarters. Important road junctions were occupied with handfuls of men all over the area of operations, and the enemy were denied the use of the road from Bizerta to the front, all transport attempting to use this road being destroyed. When the Germans knew that the Commando was in the area, they switched all traffic, guarding each convoy with armour and with air-cover. This multiplied considerably the distance necessary to travel between Bizerta and the front, as well as dissipating their forces. The casualties inflicted by the Allied force were out of all proportion to their own

THEY MARCHED FOR DAYS BEHIND THE ENEMY'S LINES : After crash-landing behind the German front in Tunisia, these two R.A.F. officers—a Squadron Leader and a Pilot Officer—set fire to their aircraft and then walked for many days, sometimes hiding in caves, whilst German search-parties were hunting them. They then encountered some Allied parachute troops, who had been on a mission behind the enemy's lines ; they were given a lift by these men back to an Allied forward base and safety

THREE BRITISH SAPPERS WHO SPENT THREE DAYS BEHIND THE GERMAN LINES NEAR MEDJEZ-EL-BAB. Whilst on a special mission, these men were cut off from their comrades. Tired and hungry, they were hunted by German tanks, but succeeded in regaining the British lines in safety

HOW H.M.S. "SCYLLA" (5,450-TON CRUISER OF THE DIDO CLASS) CAUGHT AND SANK A LARGE GERMAN BLOCKADE-RUNNER IN THE ATLANTIC

Royal Navy in five weeks. A Sunderland of an Australian Squadron of Coastal Command shadowed the enemy vessel and then flew on a parallel course, dro
give the cruiser the exact position of the enemy. Night was coming on, so that it was essential to stop the blockade-runner quickly: the cruiser's forward
and her crew took to the boats; she was then torpedoed and sunk (*see notes at right*)—*Drawing by Montague Dawson*

A BATTLE WAGED IN THE ICY TWILIGHT OF THE ARCTIC WINTER, when a small force of British destroyers routed a vastly superior high-speed German naval squadron
an Allied convoy bound for Russia east of Bear Island and off North Cape. The British Commander, Capt. R. St. V. Sherbrooke, has been awarded the V.C. as a ro

Unscathed in the action depicted above, an Allied convoy has now arrived in Soviet ports with vital military supplies. It was escorted by a small force of British destroyers, which routed a much superior high-speed German naval force, led by a pocket-battleship, which tried in vain to annihilate the Allied merchantmen. Despite being hopelessly out-gunned, the British destroyers swept in to the attack from the moment the enemy squadron was first sighted. Four times the German warships tried to pierce the destroyers' line to get at the merchant ships. On each occasion they failed, and finally they fled—when British reinforcements, in the form of heavy ships, arrived on the scene. The action was fought in semi-darkness, and with visibility further reduced by frequent snowstorms, making contact with the enemy fleeting and interm
and the enemy suffered the loss o
of their larger ships. In the p
and *Onslow* engaging the heavier G
built in 1929. She was damaged

THE END OF A GERMAN BLOCKADE-RUNNER

And Two Other Special Drawings in Illustration of the Never-Ceasing Work of the Royal Navy

The Admiralty communiqué which gave details of the action depicted in Mr. Dawson's drawing runs as follows: "A large German vessel, attempting to run the blockade, heavily laden with raw materials for Germany, has been intercepted by our patrols and sunk in the Atlantic. The enemy vessel was sighted by an aircraft of Coastal Command, which directed our surface forces to the area in which the enemy was ultimately found, and sunk by H.M.S. *Scylla* (Captain I. A. P. MacIntyre, C.B.E., D.S.O., R.N.)."

This is the fourth German blockade-runner to be intercepted by our naval forces in the last five weeks. The destruction of the enemy vessel was an excellent example of naval-air co-operation, says the Air Ministry. The enemy was spotted by a Wellington of Coastal Command, and a Sunderland of an Australian Squadron of Coastal Command was sent out to shadow it. The search was made in "the worst flying conditions I have experienced," said the pilot. "Ultimately we found and identified our quarry. We immediately gave the cruiser the position of the enemy ship by signal lamp. Her captain shot off in pursuit. We flew a parallel track, dropping smoke floats to give her a straight course."

CAPTAIN I. A. P. MACINTYRE, C.B.E., D.S.O., R.N., in his cabin aboard H.M.S. "Scylla"

Only "wizard" navigation enabled the Sunderland on the return journey to land safely in the dark with petrol nearly exhausted.

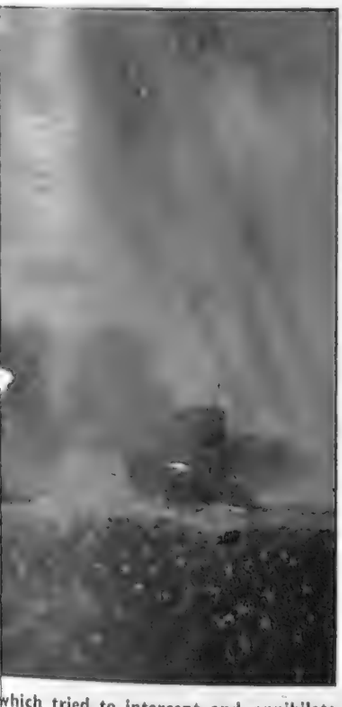
It was at the end of a race against nightfall that the cruiser caught and sank the German vessel. The cruiser reached the estimated position of the enemy ship late in the afternoon. She was beginning to search the area when the aircraft of Coastal Command appeared, and signalled that she had sighted the enemy ship only 20 miles away. The original calculations made by Captain MacIntyre and excellent navigation had brought the *Scylla* more than 200 miles through a gale to a point only 20 miles from the enemy vessel.

"On being sighted, the enemy altered course," said Captain MacIntyre. "I continued to overhaul her, and then ordered one salvo to be fired to fall ahead of her. My intention was to stop her or draw her fire, as at this time there was no indication that she was not a raider well armed to fight if cornered. But the enemy then altered course in a manner which would enable her to open fire, so she was engaged by the for'ard guns."

Soon flames were seen coming from the superstructure of the enemy vessel, and then it was noticed that the crew were abandoning ship. The cruiser ceased fire until the lifeboats were clear of the ship, and then the blockade-runner was finally sunk with a torpedo. This was done as quickly as possible, because it was believed that German aircraft and U-boats might be in the vicinity.

That was the end of another German ship trying to run the blockade with a big cargo of raw materials for Germany.

the fourth to be so caught by the ping smoke floats, as shown above, to uns soon had the enemy ship on fire,



which tried to intercept and annihilate t of this action—*Drawing by Wm. McDowell*

nt. Fighting continued for about two hours, a destroyer of the Maas class and damage to one re above are seen the two destroyers *Achates* man ships: the former was an elderly destroyer d subsequently sank.

HOW THE NAVY TAKES WATER TO THE EIGHTH ARMY IN TRIPOLITANIA in big tank-landing craft which have been adapted specially for this vital purpose—*Drawing by Wm. McDowell*

In order to assist the soldiers marching and fighting in the waterless desert zones of North Africa, tank-landing craft have been performing splendid service. These vessels—much larger than many people imagine—are capable of carrying many thousands of gallons, contained in metal drums. The shallow draught makes them very suitable for landing their precious cargoes on the sandy beaches. In this drawing, two of the larger types, escorted by a corvette, are making their way through the choppy shallows of the coast: as the Dornier bombers come over, in an attempt to hamper the operation, the water-ships put up a brisk anti-aircraft fire, causing a near-miss when the bomber expected to register a direct hit!

THE EIGHTH ARMY IN TRIPOLITANIA

The German Defensive Line at Zemzem: and a Description of Life in a Desert Tank

THE most surprising thing about a tank when it emerges from the factory is its smartness—indeed, its luxurious appearance. Pictures from the battlefields have so accustomed one to begrimed monsters that the impeccability of the new paint, the well-greased bearings and the chaste lines (unimpeded by aught but a few accessories) seem unreal. Inside the impression is still more incongruous, with that fine, padded upholstery of expensive pig-skin, that driver's seat and dashboard like the interior of a millionaire's sports car. But do not revise your ideas of the conditions under which our tank men work. You should see that same tank after it has sojourned some time in the desert.

The sight would probably convince you at once that, if anything, the original trappings of that tank were too spartan. Already the hull has lost its paint-work in many places, where the relentless sun in conjunction with the night frosts have blistered the surface and allowed rust to emerge. Sand clings to the grease of those bearings, and perhaps one or two large dents betoken the effects of some fiercer than climatic assault. Then inside—the pig-skin no longer has that Bond Street appearance (though its durability, for which it was chosen, is happily evident), and the place where the driver sits may reveal horrifying blood-stains below an instrument board which, though shattered, is still working, thanks to its fineness.

And what are the tank crew doing? They may well be peering over enigmatic maps with grim eyes, or lounging comfortably in the N.A.A.F.I. down the road. Well, as a matter of fact, three of them are engaged this moment in trying to wash their shirts in a few pints of muddy water that they have already used to wash themselves. See how the Commander's best silk is already smacking vigorously in the gritty breeze at the top of that pennant pole? Enemy reconnaissance planes will not learn much from that identification mark if they come over. And the other two members of the crew? At the moment, believe it or not, they are engaged in a game of darts, played with a regulation board that is hanging on the hull next to a number of painted death's heads, which record this particular tank's score of enemy armoured vehicles so far.

ONE OF THE MEN WHO BEAT ROMMEL, in his travelling wartime home: A British tank man serving with the Eighth Army in Tripolitania scans the sky for hostile aircraft from the turret of his American-built fighting vehicle

THE TANK MAN RELAXES: Asleep amongst live ammunition in the turret of a General Grant tank

The point to appreciate is that the tank, having restored mobility to armies, has to bear the brunt of the discomforts and inconveniences that wartime mobility involves. It boasts that it can dash forward and, by reason of its armour, fight where softer-skinned formations cannot exist. But the men who work that tank have to go with it, and attend to their natural needs as best they may. Not even the smallest ships afford their crews less domestic and toilet facilities than tanks. The interiors of these vehicles are designed to carry quite a considerable cargo, but this must mainly be lethal, ammunition and fuel. Ask a "tankee" whether he would prefer to take an extra suit-case with him or another few rounds of ammunition, and he would not hesitate to answer that he wants to get back home, not indulge in a dress parade.

Accordingly these crews develop the skill of Asiatic nomads or Polar explorers at fending for their every need with a minimum of facilities. Meals—they are all cooked with billy-can and frying-pan on a small petrol stove (and huge tin plates of porridge and mugs of steaming coffee are usually ready for breakfast within ten minutes of arising in the dank dark of morning). Most provisions come out of the tin, in scientifically reduced form. Toilet—it is all an open-air job, the meagre allowance of water being shared between that coffee, that clothes washing, and the insatiable tank radiator. If the crew shaves, it is not till later in the day, when it is possible to obtain a brief glimpse of one's dirt-crusted face in the small mirror dangling from the spare tracks, or the driver's reflector mirror on the front "wing."

Sleeping—the facilities consist of blankets, which are spread on whichever side the wind is not blowing, or perhaps under the belly of the great machine. The would-be sleeper lies down and pulls the sides and ends of the blankets over him, not forgetting to bring his boots and any discarded clothes inside also. This is because the entire environment will be wet in the morning, soggy with a dew that makes exposed boots an agony to wear and exposed clothing a danger.

But the crews take good care to ensure that their domesticity does not interfere with their fighting efficiency. One desert tank was temporarily disabled. A member of the crew had to emerge and tinker with a mechanism on the hull. Lying flat on his stomach at this work, he was saved from several deaths by a pile of haversacks which screened him from the enemy. When eventually examined, they were riddled with machine-gun bullets. Well, it so happened that they had been previously filled with sand, against just such a contingency. . . .

D. C.

LUNCH FOR THIS TANK CREW must always be eaten within a few yards of the tank itself. The chocolate biscuits are home-made, and the "plate" and "silver" are all of the familiar Army issue!

THE DEFENSIVE LINE IN FRONT OF MISURATA—THE ZEMZEM LINE—which Rommel might attempt to hold against General Montgomery. Backed up by the great Marsh of Tauarga, this may prove a formidable obstacle to the Eighth Army—*Drawing by Percy Home*

After General Rommel's race along the coast road skirting the Gulf of Sirte, he slowed down the retreat of his Afrika Korps in the neighbourhood of the Wadi el Kebir (or Chebir), one of the deep gullies which run down from the interior desert lands straight to the sea. But it was not long before the enemy was observed to be drawing out again to a point farther to the west: the making of gun emplacements and other signs of "digging in" were observed in the region of the Wadi Zemzem, another deep gorge which (in this case) does *not* run down to the sea but terminates at the village of Gheddahia. The bluffs of this wadi are evidently considered more defensible than those of the Wadi el Kebir: there are evidently fewer lateral slopes by which it could be entered at right angles by the infantry and vehicles of the Eighth Army. The sides of the wadi itself are steep and show clearly the absolutely level strata of which the desert is composed: against its sides the sand blows in cone-shaped masses which would form a slippery ladder for anyone who desired to reach the top of the plateau. The enemy's main forces in this area are reported to have been disposed on and around the main road to the west of the great Marsh of Tauarga. There is a secondary road which runs down the length of the narrow tract separating the marsh from the sea to the east: this serves the two or three villages situated here. The land in this district shows signs of an increasing fertility. Trees give occasional cover, but it is not until Misurata is reached that the big oases support hundreds of thousands of palms and tens of thousands of olive trees. A small portion of Rommel's forces moved northwards during the second week of January, making for Misurata and beyond: but a strong force still faced the British positions at Buerat and the adjoining cliffs of the Wadi el Kebir. Patrols were in constant activity, probing the enemy's positions by day and night while—at the same time—General Montgomery was still bringing up his heavy material

A FIGHTING FRENCH FLYING COLUMN IN THE DESERT EQUIPPED WITH 6-POUNDER CRUSADER TANKS: For the first time since the collapse of France, the Fighting French have now formed their own armoured column, known as the "Flying Column N1." They work with a British armoured brigade, and go out to harass the enemy by undertaking wide sweeps through his territory. In this column are men from French Morocco, Paris, Bordeaux, "French Germans," and a good many men from the famous Foreign Legion

WHAT THE GERMAN INVASION HAS MEANT TO THE RUSSIAN VILLAGERS: Women return to their birthplace to find their homes entirely obliterated—deliberately torn down by the invaders, and the material used to build underground winter "fortresses"—*Drawing by W. G. Whitaker*

From a Soviet source, we take the following poignant description: "There is not a single house left standing in the Don Bend, where the Germans so recently held sway. Nothing is left of the orchards in the Cossack villages—only blackened fences encircling groups of charred trees. Of the village houses, nothing remains but the foundations of yellowish grey stone and an occasional tall stove, with a pot-bellied cauldron standing just as the housewife left it. Here and there you come across an old kettle, a flat-iron, a cracked jar. It is a queer sort of devastation. Every single house has gone. Even the heaviest bombing leaves a few houses standing. And suppose the village had been set afire from end to end, the traces would be left—heaps of ashes and cinders, charred logs, clay, glass, nails. But there is no sign of debris. The Germans were here. They settled down to winter on the Don. But they were frightened to live above ground, frightened to live in houses where Cossack people still dwelt. So they pulled the cottages to pieces and used the materials to build themselves underground winter 'fortresses.' With the logs they made thick covers over their burrows. They even took the window-panes and fitted them into their dug-outs. They took everything they needed to make themselves comfortable—beds, blankets, kettles, crockery, gramophones, wash-tubs. The ravines surrounding the village were roofed in and used as supply depots, stables, garages. All these were built with the village property—the bricks of the school, the logs of the Cossack houses, the timber of the collective-farm granaries."

THE CAMPAIGN ON THE RUSSIAN FRONT

—Two Special Sphere Drawings

THE RUSSIAN OBSERVATION AND SCOUTING PATROLS, AND THE MANNER IN WHICH THEY WORK on the fringe of the German Army in retreat. Observers take up their post in the trees, whilst white-clad scouting parties, drawing sleighs, approach the enemy lines—*Drawing by W. G. Whitaker*

"Offensive operations by artillery in woodland areas demand exhaustive reconnaissance of the enemy's firing points and fortifications, particularly those deep within his defences," writes a Soviet authority on this subject. "Observation points have to be placed so that the observer may see far into the enemy dispositions and study them thoroughly. This is by no means easy in wooded areas. First of all, it is essential that the site of the observation point should not be connected with the position of the supporting infantry unit. In woodland districts, the observer usually operates from tall trees, equipped with a stereotelescope. It is wise to prepare two or three alternative observation points so that one or other may be used, as circumstances dictate. The enemy's inner defences should be investigated by special infantry and artillery scouts with wireless apparatus. A useful piece of reconnaissance was carried through only the other day by infantry and artillery scouts led by Lieutenant Shakhov. They went into the rear of a fortified centre, where for three days they investigated German artillery and mortar positions, transmitting the information back to headquarters by wireless. The outcome of this exact spotting was that two enemy trench-mortar batteries and one artillery battery were destroyed."

THE sequel to *Bomber Command* and *The Battle of Britain* has just been published; and it is undoubtedly already a "best seller." Prepared by the Ministry of Information for the Air Ministry, it is a magnificently produced volume of 144 pages at the price of 2s. The book contains 130 photographs, many of which have not before been published, and some of the more striking of these are reproduced on this and the following pages.

Coastal Command is the account which that branch of the R.A.F. has played, and is playing, in the War by air and by sea. The "Battle of the Atlantic" is, in short, Coastal Command's chief concern; to fight and win that battle its main task.

It carries this out in many ways; by protecting convoys, by anti-submarine sweeps and patrols, by "strikes" against U-boats and surface raiders, by combat with enemy aircraft, by attacking his bases, by unending reconnaissance over the sea and along his coasts.

In the fulfilment of these duties aircraft of Coastal Command between September 3, 1939, and September 30, 1942, escorted 4,947 merchant convoys, attacked 587 U-boats, and flew some 55,000,000 miles.

Much of Coastal Command's work is unspectacular, is carried out hundreds of miles from land beyond sight of witnesses and leaves no record of stirring adventure or thrilling escape.

The chief enemy of the aircraft engaged on these heroic tasks is not flak, neither is it fighters. It is the weather, changeable and treacherous at most times, but particularly hostile in the winter months. Then there are the winds. These will reach gale force in a matter of minutes. At the aerodrome the wind has been known to blow at 62 miles an hour, to increase to 76 miles within an hour, and an hour later to record 90 miles, the gusts reaching a maximum velocity of 133 miles an hour.

Fog and icebergs are other dangers with which Coastal Command patrols are constantly contending. More than one pilot has seen an iceberg loom up suddenly on his port or starboard bow. Some are 200 ft. high. . . .

The threat of flak or fighters is indeed by no means so imminent as many other hazards of Coastal Command, but these hazards when they do exist are generally taken as a matter of course and few details find their way into print. Here is the kind of "descriptive" account which constitutes a "full report" of an incident that must have contained a thrilling adventure. . . .

A Whitley was on patrol 200 miles off Iceland on Christmas Eve. At 3.49 p.m. its base received the following message: "S.O.S. Am landing in sea. Merry Christmas." It is pleasant to record that the Whitley got back on one engine and landed safely!

On another occasion a Hudson was forced to alight in the sea 135 miles from the coast of West Africa. The crew swam to their dinghy, which was not inflated and was found to be inverted. Almost immediately two sharks arrived and circled, one with fin above the water and the other well below the surface. In driving them off the crew lost the dinghy pump. No action could be taken for some time as regards the dinghy, as the attention of the crew was fully occupied with the sharks, and the crew, clinging to the dinghy, had to position themselves so that each could see behind his opposite number. A good watch was kept and the sharks were frequently driven off by splashing. The crew eventually succeeded in righting and boarding the dinghy, from which they were rescued some forty-eight hours later.

The hunting and destruction of the *Bismarck* is described at length, from the moment when, on May 21, 1941, an aircraft of Coastal Command, in the course of a reconnaissance of the Norwegian coast, flew as far as Bergen. Reconnoitring the approaches to that port the pilot discovered two warships, one of large size, at anchor in a small fjord. The photographs which he took were to be delivered immediately to Headquarters; but the only aircraft available was that of the pilot who had just finished the patrol.

It was now evening. Nevertheless, he took off and flew south through the night until he found himself short of petrol on the outskirts of Nottingham, his home town. Here he landed and made for the house of a friend, whose motor-car he borrowed. At an average speed of 52 miles an hour he continued his journey by road through the darkness to Coastal Command Headquarters, where he arrived in the early hours of the morning and delivered the prints.

Admiralty and photographic experts confirmed the opinion of the Intelligence Officer in Scotland. The *Bismarck* and the *Prince Eugen* were out.

The story of the six-days' chase of the *Bismarck*, ending in her final destruction by the *Dorsetshire*, is told in detail in *Coastal Command*, which recaptures the thrills of the victory and emphasises the perfect co-operation which existed between the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force throughout the engagement.

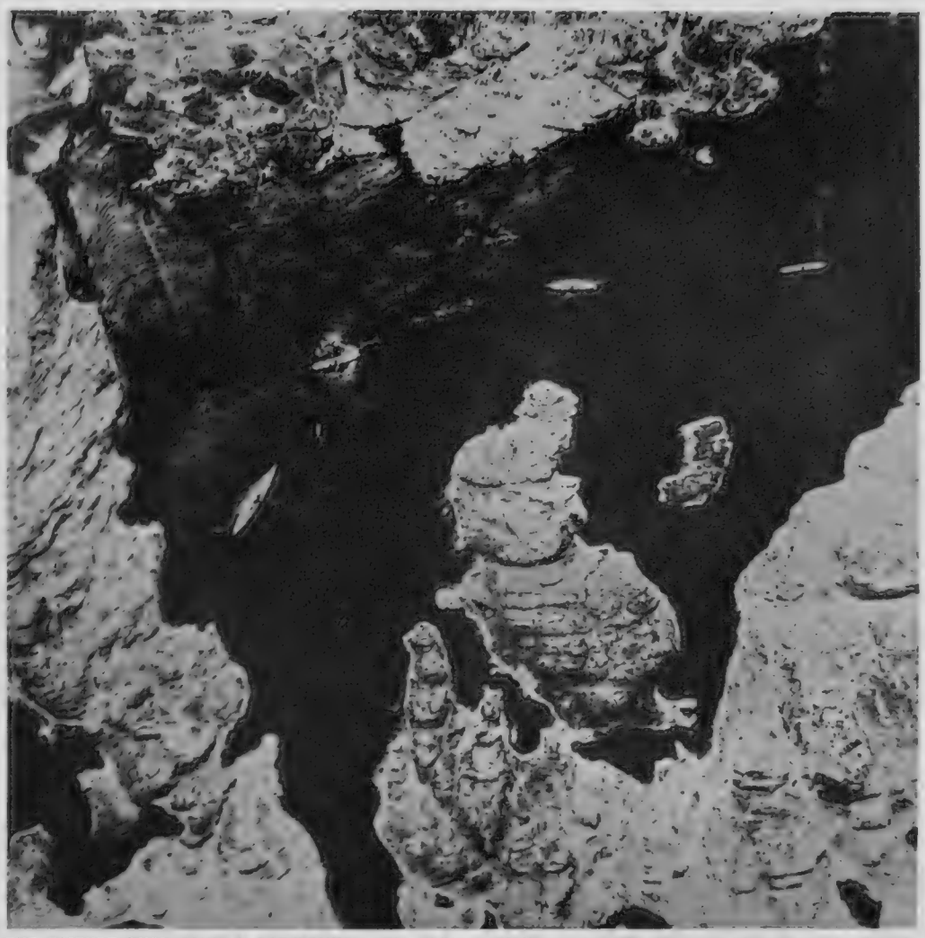
Attacks on the *Scharnhorst*, *Gneisenau*, and other vessels, all find their place in this vivid account of Coastal Command's activities. One attack, in which six Beauforts were given the task of torpedoing one of the battle-cruisers at Brest, demonstrates the spirit in which Coastal Command is doing its job.

The aerodrome in the south-west from which the Beauforts started was rain-soaked and three of them became bogged in trying to take off. They had no further part in the operation. The fourth failed to find Brest in the haze and returned to base with its torpedo. The fifth went in to attack a few minutes too late, when it was broad daylight, and with the battle-cruiser completely hidden by a bank of haze. The aircraft soon turned away and climbed into cloud.

The sixth and last Beaufort went in a few minutes earlier. It found an enemy battle-cruiser, almost certainly the *Gneisenau*, lying alongside the quay on the North shore. There it was protected by a stone mole. The Beaufort came in very low and was at once under the fire of some 270 anti-aircraft guns of varying calibres established on the rising ground behind the ship and on the two arms of land which encircled the outer harbour. To this formidable concentration was added the barrage from the guns of the warship itself and from those of three flak-ships.

Having penetrated these imposing defences, the Beaufort, after its low-level attack, would have had the greatest difficulty in avoiding the rising ground behind the harbour. All these obstacles must have been known to the pilot, who, "despising the heavy odds, went cheerfully and resolutely to the task." He passed the anti-aircraft ships at less than mast high, flying into the very muzzle of their guns. He skimmed the mole and a torpedo was launched point-blank at a range of some 500 yards. The battle-cruiser was hit and damaged below the water-line. The Beaufort did not return. There is a story that it fell on the deck of its quarry. It

(Continued on following page)



THE PICTURE THAT SANK A BATTLESHIP. The "Bismarck" caught by photographic reconnaissance in Dobric Fiord, just before she weighed anchor for her last and final sortie. (*This picture, like the others in this section, has been reproduced by permission from "Coastal Command"*)

COASTAL COMMAND, R.A.F.

The Full Story of the Work Carried Out at Sea by British Aircraft Around Britain, and Over the Atlantic and Other Seas, Told at Length: and Illustrated with a Number of Hitherto Unpublished Pictures

THE TELL-TALE WAKE OF THE "BISMARCK" during the action in which she was sunk: The picture shows that the attack by Swordfish aircraft of Coastal Command has damaged her steering-gear and left her out of control and at the mercy of the Royal Navy

CLOSE CO-OPERATION between the Royal Navy and the R.A.F. is the secret of Coastal Command's success. The Naval Commander-in-Chief at Rosyth is here seen with the Air Officer Commanding, directing an operation upon the Norwegian coast

AT AREA COMBINED HEADQUARTERS, Naval and Air Force officers work side by side, in two offices fronting the "Plot," on which every new movement in the Battle of the Atlantic is recorded

COASTAL COMMAND OFFICERS AT WORK during an operation. Through the glass wall of their office they watch the fortunes of battle recorded on the "Plot"

(Continued from preceding page)

was manned by a graduate of Cambridge University, a Canadian from Toronto, a farmer from Somerset, and a chauffeur from North London.

The building-up of the Command is traced stage by stage. At the centre is Headquarters, where the Commander-in-Chief is in constant touch with the Admiralty, with whom there is close co-operation at all times. Contact is maintained by Naval officers stationed at the one place and R.A.F. officers stationed at the other. Each keeps the other "in the picture" throughout. The command is divided into groups whose geographical boundaries conform to those of the Naval Commands on shore with which they are associated.

Each Air Force group and Naval Command possesses an Area Combined Headquarters, where the Operations Room, common to both Services, is situated. The Air Officer commanding the group, usually an Air Vice-Marshal, has his office next to that of the Naval Commander-in-Chief, who is an Admiral or Vice-Admiral. They fight their part of the war together.

Operations Rooms of Area Combined Headquarters, the hub of Coastal Command activities, are designed to a standard pattern. Some of them are sunk many feet underground and are approached by long flights of steps.

ONE OF THE SECRETS OF 1939: Aircraft versus the magnetic mine. Wellingtons were fitted with a device for exploding the magnetic mines laid by the enemy in our waters. This minesweeping from the air was a hard and hazardous job

All are surrounded by groups of offices containing the various branches of the staff.

Take, as an example, the room most directly concerned with the Battle of the Atlantic. It is large and lofty, oblong in shape, and bright with a soft, reflected light. Along the whole length of the longer wall is a huge board, on which is painted a map of the Atlantic. The land is coloured brownish yellow, and on it are marked the stations belonging to the Group, the harbours used by the Royal Navy and such stations of Fighter Command as are in the area.

On this map, which is some 16 ft. high and 30 ft. long, the Battle of the Atlantic is shown in full detail, so that the exact position can be seen at any moment. Each convoy and the nature of its escort, both sea and air, is marked with the appropriate symbol and its route by elastic strings of different colours. The position of every U-boat, known or suspected, is also shown, as are those of our own submarines and surface vessels. Localities where attacks by German aeroplanes, U-boats, or surface raiders have taken place are similarly recorded. If a U-boat is sunk the symbol representing it on the map is turned upside down. Cardboard arrows indicate the speed and direction of the wind.

THE "PLOT" ITSELF, a huge map of the Atlantic where the position of convoys, escort vessels and enemy raiders can be seen at a glance

On each side of the main board are two smaller boards recording information about convoys, naval escort and aircraft. The information on these boards is written in chalk of various colours, each colour having its special significance. To the right and left are offices staffed by Naval and Air Force personnel, who are engaged in collating and checking the information as it comes through. Above these offices are those of the two Naval and Air Commanders, similarly

"A GOOD INTELLIGENCE OFFICER must have something of the qualities of Herodotus, Socrates and Voltaire. He must be tireless in collecting facts, expert in checking them, concise in presenting them"

SKULKING IN A DARK CORNER OF JOSING FJORD, the prison ship "Altmark" is discovered by Coastal Command reconnaissance before the famous "cutting out" exploit by the Royal Navy

THE FROZEN LAKE AT JORNVATNET, used by the Germans as a makeshift airfield. A Wellington spotted twenty-two aircraft on it. As a result the lake was bombed—"with excellent effect"

CRASH LANDINGS ON KATTEWIJK BEACH, observed by our reconnaissance aircraft on May 10, 1940, were one of the first signs that the invasion of the Low Countries had actually begun

ONE OF THE WAR'S MOST DRAMATIC PICTURES. The solitary survivor of a torpedoed merchantman on the upturned bottom of a smashed lifeboat

BREST. A Coastal Command aircraft, diving out of low cloud, flew at 500 ft. over the most heavily defended harbour on the Continent to take this photograph of a Hipper-class cruiser in dock

"WHILE RETURNING TO ITS BASE THE AIRCRAFT RAN INTO BAD WEATHER"—a phrase which has frequently been used by pilots of Coastal Command

situated and constructed. There is a partition between the offices. One wall, that giving on the map and indication boards, is of glass, so that both officers can tell at a glance the swaying fortunes of this never-ceasing struggle.

The Royal Navy and Coastal Command have brought co-operation and flexibility of effort to a fine art. Their forces are not only sent into action instantly, but are switched to any desired point with a speed never before achieved in warfare. They join with ship-borne naval aircraft in extending the vision and striking power of the Fleet.

The photographs are a leading feature of *Coastal Command*. Among those which are available for publication for the first time is "The Picture that sank a Battleship." This is a reconnaissance photograph of the *Bismarck* in Dobric Fjord just before she weighed anchor for her first and last sortie. There is also a remarkable photograph of the *Prinz Eugen* spotted in Hjelte Fjord. Another photograph available for the first time shows the erratic wake of the *Bismarck*, tell-tale sign of the damage to her steering gear in the attack by Swordfish of the Fleet Air Arm. One of the most daring reconnaissance photographs of the war, a Hipper-class cruiser in dry dock at Brest, taken from 500 ft., is also new.

A TELLING ILLUSTRATION FROM THE NEW BOOK: "These Atlantic Convoys are a grand sight when you come upon them in the early morning. The ships in their neat formation have a sort of waking-up appearance—like some trim little village at dawn"

HIGH-LEVEL ATTACK. Flying at 8,000 ft. above its target, a Hudson, using the Sperry bomb-sight, scored this direct hit on the stern of a German supply ship

ENSA ENTERTAINS THE FORCES

The Work of the "Entertainments National Service Association" All Over the World. Described by CHARLES GRAVES

EVERY day of the week you will see some reference to Ensa in the national Press. And yet, I wonder, how many people really know what Ensa stands for? The answer is Entertainments National Service Association. I point this out because Ensa badly needs 1,500 more artists to keep up with the increase of the Forces and munition workers; and unless the Ministry of Labour directs a number of actors and actresses into its ranks as part of the national service, it will be impossible to keep up the standard of entertainment, which is already severely affected by the boom in the national theatre, the call-up of Ensa artists to the Armed Forces and the increasing demand for more entertainment units.

Ensa has a floating army of over 2,000 artists, who provide 1,650 live shows a week—1,000 for the Armed Forces and 650 for munition workers. At the outbreak of war it was not difficult to supply actors and actresses in sufficient quantities. The commercial theatre in London came to a full-stop, with the exception of the Windmill Theatre. The cinema industry was also badly hit. To-day the cinemas and theatres are taking more money than ever before. In consequence, there are fewer actors and actresses out of work and therefore available for Ensa. Earlier in the war any reasonably good actors or actresses who were unemployed could cut their losses by going to Ensa and signing on for a tour. These tours are anything from six months to eighteen months in Great Britain, and even longer overseas. But the top salary is £10 a week, the minimum being £4 15s.—out of which 35s. a week is deducted for board and lodging. Against this, living conditions for Ensa artists in the early days of the war were inevitably very poor. Many of the Army units were in remote areas, with no hostels or other accommodation available for civilian entertainers. All that has been altered. Dozens of country mansions have been acquired by Ensa, and hundreds of regular boarding-houses have been booked for fifty-two weeks in each year to supply accommodation for Ensa artists.

Naafi subsidises all the entertainment of the Armed Forces, while the Ministry of Labour does the same for the entertainments provided for munition workers. It is true that the troops are expected to contribute to all the Category A shows and some of the B and C Category shows. But the 3d. from each private, the 6d. from each N.C.O. and the 1s. from each officer only pays for the lighting and theatre staff. At which stage it should be pointed out that the Categories A, B, C and D are purely a matter of size, not of quality. Category A is a show big enough to go to a garrison theatre; Category B is a smaller, but still large, entertainment for a camp hall; C is the cinema Category, and 850 of these were given last week; D are merely small parties of up to four entertainers, who travel by car and are so exceedingly mobile that they can give their shows at gun-sites, Naafi canteens, small village halls and the like.

To-day, shows are being given all over England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Parties penetrate as far afield as the Orkneys, the Shetlands, the Faroe Islands, Iceland, Gibraltar (where Beatrice Lillie, John Gielgud and Edith Evans have been entertaining recently), the Middle East, West Africa, East Africa, Madagascar, Iraq and Iran. The first Ensa party is scheduled to open its tour of entertainments in India to-day. Soon Ensa will be entertaining potential air crews right across Canada. Transport, of course, governs everything. Baggage and personal kit are strictly limited, and yet it is claimed that each show is complete in itself.

There has been much comment recently on the alleged vulgarity of Ensa comedians. Investigation shows that this is really not the fault of Ensa itself. Every script is scrutinised by the silver-haired widow of Percy Pitt. As official censor to Ensa, she sometimes removes every single gag from a script, including many which have been passed by the Lord Chamberlain's Office. It is impossible, however, to prevent comedians slipping blue jokes into their patter. All that can be done is to black-list or suspend the transgressors. This action has been taken against 5 per cent. of the comedians. Each Ensa area organiser acts as the local Lord Chamberlain, and a separate report on each show is forwarded by a Service officer present at the entertainment. Sometimes there are complaints that the shows are too refined; and recently at a Waaf unit Mrs. Pitt, who had been present with a stenographer to check on the jokes and the audience reaction, was confronted by the comment: "It was very mild. Couldn't we have had it a bit more blue?"

On consideration, the only possible way in which indecent jokes could be avoided would be to record all the entertainments. This is being done in many instances for the troops overseas. The shows are presented before the microphone at the Fortune Theatre at the rate of ten hours a week, and is a valuable addition to the live entertainment, being able to go where living shows cannot. The scheme is divided roughly into three parts—one-third of the entertainment being provided by recordings made by the Armed Forces; one-third by transcriptions of actual B.B.C. programmes; and one-third provided direct by Ensa. These recordings are despatched to twenty-three broadcasting stations, which transmit them all over the Mediterranean, Middle East and Africa. Even troops right in the battle-line receive this entertainment.

The Canadian forces in this country have a special service from Ensa. They choose and buy their entertainments from their welfare funds. Canadians, it seems, have curious tastes. Many of them have never seen a living theatre entertainment before. Many others do not understand Cockney humour. Their shows, therefore, have to be particularly light and musical. By contrast, the American troops over here prefer to see the indigenous entertainment in the same way that they like to sample the indigenous whisky and beer.

As a matter of historical fact, Ensa has its roots in 1916, when Basil Dean was a theatrically-minded captain in the Cheshire Regiment and saw the need for entertainment. As a result, N.A.C.B. (Navy and Army Canteen Boards) entertainments came into existence. These were on a small scale even in 1918, and just before Munich Basil Dean, realising that war was once again in the air, decided that organised entertainment for the troops was of primary importance. By February 1939 he had completed a skeleton organisation. On September 8, 1939, Ensa moved into Drury Lane. It was the only possible place—being complete with rehearsal rooms, the huge stage, workshops, paint frames, wardrobe and electrical shops.

As the B.E.F. increased, so did the Ensa companies. Basil Dean, realising that the phoney war period was about to end sooner or later, had all plans made in case field warfare broke out west of Metz. At 6 a.m. on May 10 news reached London of a German attack on Holland and Belgium. By 10 a.m. the prearranged scheme was put in hand. By noon every Ensa artist was in transit for Havre. By next morning they were all at the port of embarkation awaiting transport. Some of the mobile cinemas continued to give shows within a mile or so of the advancing Germans. Some of these were lost, but not the personnel.

After the evacuation from France, Basil Dean realised that the munition workers were now in the Front Line, and suggested to Herbert Morrison, then Minister of Supply, the idea of extending entertainment to them. Herbert Morrison contacted Ernest Bevin, and factory entertainment began.

All during the Battle of Britain the Ensa shows continued in camps, air stations, naval bases and factories. On one occasion near Hull an entertainment was taking place at night in a glass-roofed canteen. I am assured that an enemy aircraft actually machine-gunned the glass roof and the stage, knocking the trumpet off Fred Willdon's phono-fiddle. Fred Willdon took refuge under the piano, as did his accompanist. The audience hid under tables and chairs to avoid the splinters of glass. According to the factory manager, this Ensa show saved 200 or 300 lives, as the official shelter to which the audience would have normally gone received a direct hit.

Last week Ensa gave over 2,500 shows to the Armed Forces and factories. No doubt there will have been a number of complaints of various sorts about the entertainments. It would be impossible for every one of them to have been entirely satisfactory, especially in view of the growing lack of entertainers for reasons listed previously. The answer is that Ensa is only too ready to enable units to entertain themselves, with a complete script, numbers, sketches, gags, ensembles, advice, professional producers and coaches—gratis; together with scenery, costumes, wigs, curtains and lighting. These can be hired temporarily, bought outright or taken on a hire-purchase system. The Ministry of Supply gives a substantial amount of priority to this scheme, and William Abingdon, who has been stage director of Drury Lane for a quarter of a century, can guarantee to provide anything within a fortnight or a month, except for musical instruments or some really unusual request. Seven times out of ten self-entertainment is always the best and, during the remaining winter months, might well be encouraged.

THE ORCHESTRA OF AN AUSTRALIAN CONCERT PARTY during a performance for troops in the Western Desert. All the equipment is carried by the performers in their converted lorry seen on the right

TINY TITA RICKARD ROAMS THE DESERT. She is a member (a very small one!) of one of the numerous concert parties now touring the Western Desert. To men who have not seen children for a long time, Tita comes as a pleasant surprise and is everywhere made welcome

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this publication should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export

HOW MALTA GREETS THE ..

A YOUNG MALTESE BOY ON HIS WAY TO THE BASTION to welcome the Navy with his Union Jack. Note the tiny pup!

PEOPLE OF MALTA ON THE UPPER BARRACA watching the ships enter the harbour after having braved the dangerous Mediterranean waters

V -ADMIRAL SIR RALPH LEATHAM (nearest camera—former C.-in-C., East Indies) watching the entry of the British ships of war into Malta Harbour

WHEN THE CONVOYS ARRIVE IN MALTA this is how they are greeted by the children who crowd the Bastions waving their big flags

TWO SAILORS AND TWO LITTLE GIRLS of Malta watching the ships arrive in the Harbour

A naval force recently arrived in the Grand Harbour at Valetta; and for the second time in one week the bastions were crowded with the people of the Island eager to welcome the Royal Navy. As the ships slid into port, the sounds of the bands playing on their decks mingled with the cheers of the populace ashore. The Eighth Army's desert victory, which placed Libyan air bases at the disposal of the R.A.F., has made the approaches to Malta much safer for Allied shipping

THE MASSIVE BRIDGE STRUCTURE OF ONE OF THE CRUISERS as it arrives in the harbour. A great welcome was given to the naval force by the brave citizens of the George Cross Island

FROM THESE WARS. . . .

Memories and Thoughts of the Years Between

—A Fortnightly Causerie **By J. G.**

THE Parish of Auburn Parva.—It is always difficult to write with restraint and impartiality on matters of religion and, even if one succeed to one's own satisfaction, the result may wound or irritate readers.

Auburn Magna is a large, widespread parish in Wessex, and for many years, under successive parsons, the Sunday services in the parish church, conducted with all the ritual of Anglo-Catholicism, have attracted worshippers from outside. Within the parish, naturally, there remained some would-be churchgoers whom these services do not attract, who are not to be moved by historical and, I am sure, well-based arguments that what Anglo-Catholicism offers is not something new, but the original offices designed for the established religion; that the matins and other services to which (by the tradition and memories of their youth these recusant parishioners remain attached) are but the compromises of the lazy-minded eighteenth century.

People who detest and suspect the smell of incense are not to be moved by arguments, however sound, in matters of religion (and vice versa). It is a difficult, controversial question, and only a rash writer would enter the lists pro or con.

I know that the services in Magna Parish Church are conducted with infinite care and reverence, and satisfy those who attend them. Of the parishioners of Magna who do not favour the Anglo-Catholic ritual, some few found refuge in the little church of Parva. This tiny church in the marshy land has a history going back beyond Doomsday Book, which records a feature in its architecture, and it was once perhaps a hunting chapel. The parish is very small and very poorly paid. I think the rector's stipend was less than £200 a year. For many years past an old and sick parson laboured here, perhaps with decreasing hope and zeal, and in a church ill-lit, always damp and always cold, faithfully provided for a very few of the faithful the traditional services of their youth. Perhaps the faithful might have been more faithful in proof of their convictions. When the weather gave any excuse for abstention, the old rector often found but "two or three gathered together," even at matins. To the end, he was faithful and did his best, being careful and competent in the preparation and delivery of his sermons, while his wife presided at the harmonium and led the singing, and helped in the service of the little church. In its time it had faithful lay supporters with money to spend on the church's adornment and upkeep.

But the rectory was left to care for itself. Until the old parson died the other day, few of the parishioners had any idea of what the inside of that house was like. Outside, it was comely enough, strongly built with a roof that looked sound, and a fine walled garden But the rector and his wife were too poor to entertain their neighbours, and when the rector died it came as a surprise to many that this rectory had no drainage system, no water laid on in the house, no bathroom, a leaking roof and damp and mouldy cellars. In the summer the family washed in the river, and all the year round drew water from an outside well.

LAND DEVELOPMENT IN THOMAS HARDY'S COUNTRY. Large areas of Cranborne Chase, which was described by the Dorset novelist as a "truly venerable tract of forest land," are now being reclaimed for cultivation. This picture, taken on the Eastbury Estate, near Tarrant Gunville, shows a "prairie buster" being used to break up the ground. Land reclaimed in this district has already produced a record yield of wheat

Indeed, this rectory fell short, to the end, of the standards of comfort demanded by an agricultural labourer of the 1930's.

Church Finance and Economics.—The finance and economics of the Church are a closed book to me. I know that, outside, the rectory was adequately painted periodically, though the roof was not mended. In recent years, I believe the stabling was repaired *as stabling*. The regulations, I am told, do not cover modernisation, such innovations as the conversion of stabling into garage facilities or the introduction of water-pipes or a bathroom. Needless to say, the rectory steadily lost value as a saleable residence in the property market, and all were shocked to learn that a heavy liability lay on the estate (if any) of the late incumbent for statutory repairs and rehabilitation. No one could conjecture how he could have found the means from his stipend, on which he and his family depended for bare existence.

Truth to tell, the diocese had long had an eye on Parva as a redundant parish. It was its intention, when the incumbent died or retired, to sell the rectory and to link the parish with Magna under Magna's vicar, and to leave it to him to provide at Parva Church, with or without the help of a curate, such services and in such form as seemed possible and good to him. But the vicar of Magna was reluctant to increase his responsibilities, already heavy enough; and many economic difficulties stood in his way, not least the question of lodging for a curate. Thus, in the negotiations which followed the rector's death, the churchwardens and supporters of Parva had many shocks and surprises. A diocesan representative came, rather reluctantly, to confer with the former, and his unsentimental and realistic attitude fell like a cold douche. He said that if the parish wanted a continuation of the old regime, it was up to them to put their hands in their pockets, to build or modernise a habitable rectory and provide an adequate endowment for a new rector. And when they had done that, they must not think they could depend on getting the type of service which they preferred. The nature of the services performed in their parish church would always be at the whim of the rector they had housed and endowed. All these, no doubt, are obvious truths and bald facts. But the obvious is often surprising.

I do not know how the matter will end, but I think it is the end of Auburn Parva as a living church. Perhaps, if there had been more of the faithful, or if the few had shown a more burning faith, this little church would have kept its light burning from Doomsday to . . . doomsday.

But it is a sad, and even disillusioning, end in this year of grace, when "never before was the need so urgent for the influence of the Church to enter into the life of the people." For here is a small section of the flock, a little band of the moderately faithful, of the "potentially interested," thrown clean out of the fold (and left naked to the winds that blow and the wolves that prowl) by the bishop and pastor of their souls.

Not that I doubt it is beyond the wit and resources of the bishop to prevent this sorry break-up. But it throws a revealing light on many dark places and tangled brakes in the past history of Church and State. It makes it clear that the task which now faces the Church, the urgent task of making once more the practice of Christianity and the worship of God a living force in the lives of the people, is a very difficult task, beset with obstacles strewn by economic forces and centuries of neglect and compromise and short-sightedness.

The New London Plays

Reviewed by PHILIP PAGE

THE little Windmill Theatre, with its non-stop revue (which has not stopped, save for necessary rest and refreshment a few hours in the twenty-four for the company, for ten years or so) has other claims to consideration in addition to its record of hard work and the fact that it is the only London theatre to have had a play written about it and produced in New York. I have not seen all its 160 editions by a very long chalk; but I have seen a good many of them. Always have I been impressed by the general air of sophisticated cleverness. To regard this "Revudeville" as merely a sort of strip-tease business for nitwits is the greatest mistake. It is true that strip-tease is a feature and that some of the local lovelies pose in the nude; they are allowed to do so by a wise and paternal Government, provided they keep perfectly still. The audience—largely male, of course—enjoy this vastly, though I doubt whether the girls do, considering the Arctic weather we have been having of late in the Straits of Dover. At some performances it has been, I imagine, a case rather of strip-sneeze. But in addition to this sort of thing there is much of real entertainment value in these Windmill revues, which are far superior to the 42nd Street stuff in New York on which to some extent they are modelled. In the latest and present edition, I was vastly amused by a sketch called "The Butler Gives Notice," with clever farcical acting by Mr. Johnny McGregor and Mr. Michael Howard. Miss Valerie Tandy, whom I remember in previous shows here as an extravagantly absurd Parisienne and also doing the Carmen Miranda stuff, is in better form than ever. This brilliant girl is the ideal revue comedienne, with brains as well as good looks. The dancing (some of it on quite serious, classical-ballet lines) is of a high standard and the New Year references were cleverly topical.

"A Midsummer Night's Dream."—And so to Shakespeare. There is something of a boom in wartime Shakespeare. Not long ago *Macbeth*, with Mr. John Gielgud, enjoyed a successful run at the Piccadilly Theatre. Mr. Robert Atkins's present season at the Westminster is having most encouraging support, very largely from young fellows in the Forces, with plenty of Americans among them. A good sign, this. He has followed *Henry IV.* with *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. I went to see this on a mid-winter nightmare of an evening, so far as the weather was concerned. But it was well worth it. Mr. Atkins himself plays Bottom, with all the splendidly English robustness he displayed in his Falstaff. The clown scenes were really funny this time (and I hope it is not blasphemous to suggest that this takes a bit of doing, probably because Tudor notions of farce are not ours). The spirit of the play, and its superb poetry, were well brought out, and that is the main thing, though I missed the lovely stage-pictures of previous productions at His Majesty's, Drury Lane, etc., with Mendelssohn's music played by a large orchestra; the Westminster season has to be run on economical lines in this respect. But Miss Helen Cherry (recently an exceptionally good Doll Tearsheet) is in the cast and is decorative enough to atone for any scenic deficiencies.

PERSONALITIES in the ALLIED ..

COLONEL DENEYS REITZ IN LONDON as the new High Commissioner for South Africa. As Mr. Sidney Waterson has relinquished this post to take up his new Ministerial appointment, Colonel Reitz has flown to Britain to succeed him. He lost no time in getting down to work at South Africa House in Trafalgar Square, where this picture was taken a few days ago. Colonel Reitz arrived here by aeroplane: so hurried was his departure from Africa that when he arrived he was still wearing a bush shirt and khaki shorts

CAPTAIN PIZEY, the man who led the destroyer attack on the "Scharnhorst" and the "Gneisenau" in the Channel. Captain C. T. M. Pizey, C.B., D.S.O., R.N., has spent most of his naval service in destroyers; to-day he is Flag Captain to the Rear-Admiral Commanding Home Fleet Destroyers. Captain Pizey led the destroyers in their attack on the fleeing *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau*, when they escaped from Brest: for this he was made a C.B. He has also won the D.S.O. and Bar for other destroyer service. Here he is seen reading through the day's signals in his cabin on board a destroyer depot ship

THE FIRST CANADIAN BOMBER GROUP NOW OPERATING FROM THIS COUNTRY. This came into being at the New Year, thus adding still another new weapon to Canada's armoury. Under the command of Air Vice-Marshal G. E. Brookes, its headquarters are situated in an old English country mansion in the heart of a group of Bomber Stations from which great four-engined bombers of R.C.A.F. Squadrons are already waging their deadly warfare against the enemy. A bomber group is one of the most complex fighting units, yet this Canadian Group has been built up in the past two months. In this picture a conference of the new Canadian Bomber Group Chiefs is seen in progress: fourth from the left is Air Vice-Marshal Brookes

LORD GORT RETURNS TO LONDON to report on Malta. Field-Marshal Lord Gort, V.C., Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Malta, is now in Britain for consultations with the Colonial Office; above he is seen on his way through Whitehall for the first of these. He is one of thirteen Field-Marshals in the British Army; and in 1939-40 he was C.-in-C. of the British Forces in France and Belgium. He was later appointed Governor and C.-in-C. at Gibraltar, going on to Malta in a similar capacity in May of last year. He will be returning to the George Cross Island after a brief leave

THE FIRST U.S. BOMBER BASED ON BRITAIN TO DESTROY A U-BOAT. Officers of a Liberator bomber are here telling Intelligence officers how they blew a German submarine out of the water and saw it sink in a patch of its own oil. This Liberator of the Eighth Air Force is believed to be the first U.S. Army plane flying from a British base to be credited with the destruction of a submarine. Seated above (from left to right) are: 1st Lieut. Irving T. Colburn, of Chicago—Bombardier; 2nd Lieut. James E. Anderson, of Austin, Texas—co-pilot; 1st Lieut. Brent F. Walker, of Jefferson City—navigator; Major Lester A. Lear, of Pleasantville, New York—Intelligence Officer. Standing are: 1st Lieut. Walter E. Thorne, of Ohio—pilot; and Major Roy L. French, of Los Angeles—Intelligence Officer

The World of Books—By Vernon Fane

MEMOIRS, MURDER AND ADVENTURE

Sir Henry Newbolt's Autobiography, and His Lighter Side; Three New Thrillers; The Balkans Under Fire

AND LETTERS OF SIR HENRY NEWBOLT (Faber and Faber. 21s.) comprise the second volume of his memoirs which he started writing in 1932, six years before his death, and they have been edited by Lady Newbolt.

This part of his reminiscences and diaries begins in 1906, and ends in 1935. The diary itself goes only to 1914, and after that journals and letters have been used to bring the biography—or autobiography—up to date. In 1907, the Newbolts moved to a lovely house near Netherhampton, and it was there for more than twenty-five years that they lived. During that most productive period of his life, Sir Henry recorded the conversations, letters and arguments of his friends, among whom were numbered Sir Edward Grey, Arthur Balfour, writers like Hardy, Wells, Henry James, Kipling, and poets (among whom we must also include Kipling) such as Yeats, Robert Bridges, de la Mare.

Soldiers and sailors there were, too, among his wide acquaintance, and closer than that cold term implies: Smith-Dorrien, Byng, Haig, Custance, Sturdee, Cradock and Jellicoe. He knew many of the great men of his times, and some of his writing reveals their value. He had his lighter side, too

THE V.C.s' SCHOOL—Two tablets in the Great Hall of Cheltenham College bear the names of the old boys who have won the highest of all awards, the Victoria Cross. Cheltenham now has no fewer than fourteen V.C.s' to honour

Oldest of the great Victorian public schools, Cheltenham College holds one record of which it is justly proud. During the 101 years in which the school has existed no fewer than fourteen Old Cheltonians have won the supreme award for valour—the Victoria Cross. For many generations Cheltenham has specialised in preparing boys for the Army, and the proportion of boys who in peacetime went to Sandhurst or the "Shop," was larger than that sent by most public schools. Owing to the impossibility of raising adequate domestic staffs, the work of making beds, cleaning classrooms, washrooms and other rooms is done by the boys. Another wartime task which is performed is the raising of vegetables. Clothes are another problem, but the head master, Mr. A. G. Elliott-Smith, has solved it very effectively. To-day all boys, no matter how many clothing coupons they may have to their credit, wear serviceable boiler-suits. Before the war the Officers' Cadet Corps was always up to strength, and to-day its wartime equivalent, the Junior Training Corps, is functioning strongly. For the air-minded, there is the Air Training Corps, while many of the older boys are members of the Home Guard. There are nearly 400 boys in the school this term, and the life the boys at Cheltenham lead in wartime is one that develops those twin assets in later life—initiative and self-reliance

MORNING PRAYERS IN THE FAMOUS OLD SCHOOL CHAPEL at Cheltenham College—"The V.C.s' School"

This letter, written in October 1916, might have been written four months ago. It described a game on which he had spent some "self-illuminating" moments. Poets and men of letters in this game were assigned to fantastic or possible roles in the current war:

"Shelley was a Consc: Objector but afterwards got a Commission in the Flying Corps. . . . Byron wrote poems in honour of the Kaiser as 'Beloved Chief' and finally went to Greece where he became an ardent Venezelist and died of a chill caught while waiting for the Allied advance. Dr. Johnson had a high position on the Press Bureau and censored everything. Wordy (Wordsworth) applied for the Home Command, and failing to get it took Methodist Orders and went out as a Voluntary Chaplain General. . . . Sir Philip Sidney was in the Guards and got a posthumous V.C. Carlyle died of indigestion after re-reading his *Frederick the Great*. Browning was a despatch-rider—he brought the good news from Ghent, the other men's motorcycles having broken down on the way. . . . Tennyson commanded the 1/4th Lincolnshire Farmers' Battalion (King Arthur's Own) but was cashiered for saying someone had blundered. He came home and edited the *Round Table*. And so on."

There is another letter (April 1917) which has an even closer echo in this war.

"It was quite a pleasant evening," he writes, "with good music . . . and I got as much butter as I wanted, though," he adds with delightful irrelevance, "it isn't really a good plan to preach in a theatre—you have to address three different audiences at once, like talking to a whole Hierarchy!"

Not a book to scramble through, or from which to get any quick or violent sensation, but to enjoy quietly, possibly reminiscently and at leisure.

It has been some time since I had a batch of thrillers to read, but this week, with two from the Crime Club and one from Chapman and Hall, I have been thoroughly indulged.

The last-mentioned should not, perhaps, strictly count, since, although it is concerned with a crime, it is in no sense a detective novel—rather a psychological drama. It is also far less entertaining (since all convinced thriller-readers regard murder as entertainment) than the other two.

ENVY MY SIMPLICITY (Chapman and Hall. 8s. 6d.) is a story based on the curiously twisted assumption that a young man who has been what country folk call "simple" from birth is for that reason a gentle, benevolent, truthful and admirable character. Certainly Sammy at eighteen is a nice, if dotty, boy, but the implied corollary that his is an enviable state is something that I cannot myself accept.

Two farm labourers, brothers, working a South Coast farm between them, are the figures of the story. The younger one is a kindly creature who, as psychologists would say, lacks co-ordination; the older, a good-looking, ambitious man, quite infatuated with a cheap girl whose strongest desire is to marry a "gentleman farmer." The farm is owned by the grandmother, and the older boy murders her to achieve marriage with his sweetheart, throwing the appearance of guilt—at least temporarily—on his brother.

There is no plot beyond that, and only a pleasantly observant feeling for the country-side itself brings Mr. Reyner Barton's novel out of the ordinary run of such work.

NO LIGHT CAME ON (Crime Club. 7s. 6d.) is a very different matter. The scene is a dateless, but certainly pre-war, Paris; the protagonists a number of rich expatriates, antique dealers, European crooks and refugees. There are priceless jewels, satin cushions, ladies', maids, sunshine in the Champs Elysées, and one or two very creepy moments. And in that last phrase, to my mind, is the essence of the whole book.

There is something far more sinister about a crime committed on a sunny day in peaceful surroundings. A. A. Milne, of all authors, proved that once and for all. And there is something equally forbidding about a brutal murder done against a background of Aubusson and Marie Laurencins, rather than squalid drugget and dripping taps.

For the purposes of this novel that is Miss Campbell's premise, too. The particularly nasty crimes, poisonings and bludgeonings with which her nice New York heroine is surrounded are done, if not with grace, at least in the most gracious of apartments in the Avenue Malakoff.

I don't like to think that my whole appreciation of this thriller is based on purely hedonistic impulses, so I will explain that its cold chills are as genuine as its tapestries, and that even if the tortures are accomplished with electric fires instead of wrought-iron tongs *au Torquemada*, it is still excellent fun.

MURDER DOWN SOUTH (Crime Club. 7s. 6d.) is purely American, to a degree where it may not even be readily understandable to an English reader as far as the background is concerned. The dark deeds, and the clues that point to their detection, are easier going. The development of the Garden Club movement, for instance, is not familiar to people here, who take gardens more as a matter of course and are inclined, in the Voltaire tradition, to cultivate their own.

In the United States, however, there is an admirable and indefatigable body of ladies, local presidents and members of garden clubs, who tour the thousands of square miles of territory, conscientiously viewing the gardens of equally appreciative growers. And you are wrong if you imagine that such a "set-up" has not even the faintest murderous implications about it.

Miss Leslie Ford has chosen the Spanish moss and dagger plants and decayed (but so-o-o aristocratic) plantations of Florida for her venue, and a very good story she has built against that exotic scene. The mechanics of the author's plot show no signs of Southern languor, and there is an agreeable Northern briskness about the intricate solution she has chosen

Miss Flavia Kingscote's BALKAN EXIT (Geoffrey Bles 10s. 6d.) is the author's story of her own escape, in 1941, from Zagreb, in Yugoslavia. "Escape" is possibly the wrong word for her adventurous journeyings since from Sarajevo she went to Albania and was later flown to internment in Italy.

Miss Kingscote was finally released and reached England through Vichy France and Spain, but the best part of her book is based where her sympathies very evidently lie—in Yugoslavia. Possibly the best story she has to tell is of the party's first night as prisoners of the Italians.

"At midnight," she writes, "we were awakened by an Italian patrol. . . . One of our party, a very big and solid young man, protested sleepily that he wanted to be left alone, whereupon the officer started to shout at him.

"'Have you ever faced the machine-gun?' he demanded, dramatically striking an heroic attitude. 'Have you ever been in battle?'

"'No,' replied our young man, wondering what was coming next.

"'Then you are only a beb-bi!' cried the Italian scornfully, 'only a leetle beb-bi. Go back to bed and sleep.'"

The passage I enjoyed considerably less, however, was the one in which the author, who had chosen to go to Yugoslavia in late September 1939, felt impelled, on returning safely to England two years later, to make an ill-judged criticism of our production effort.

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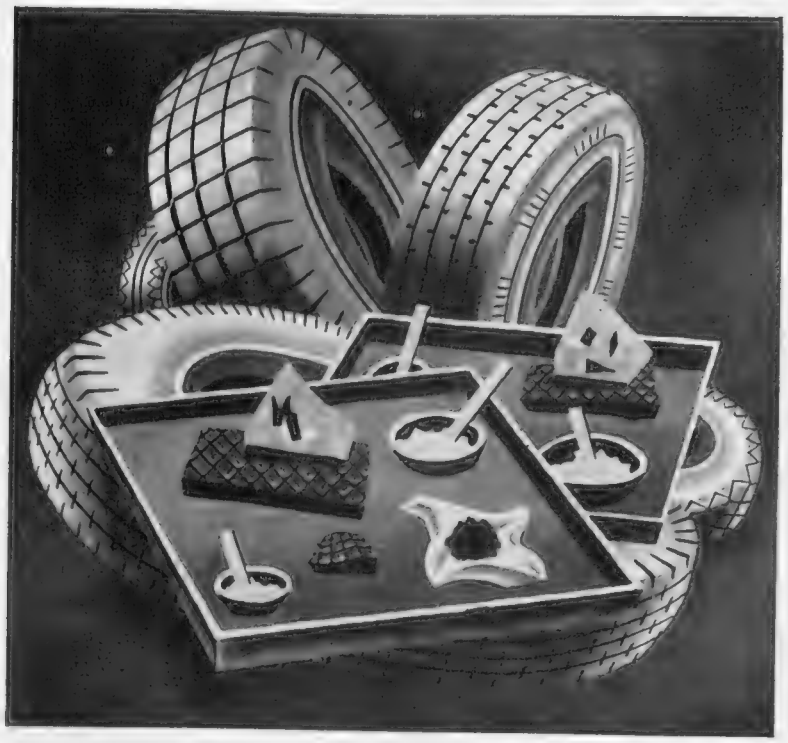

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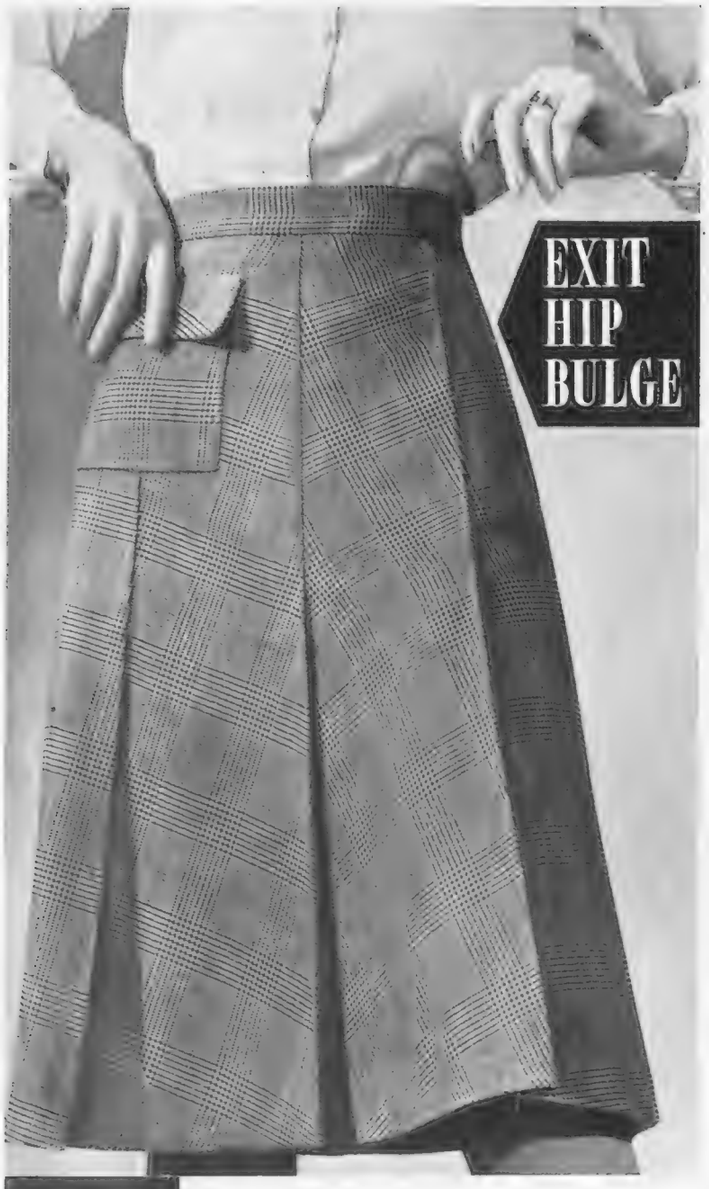

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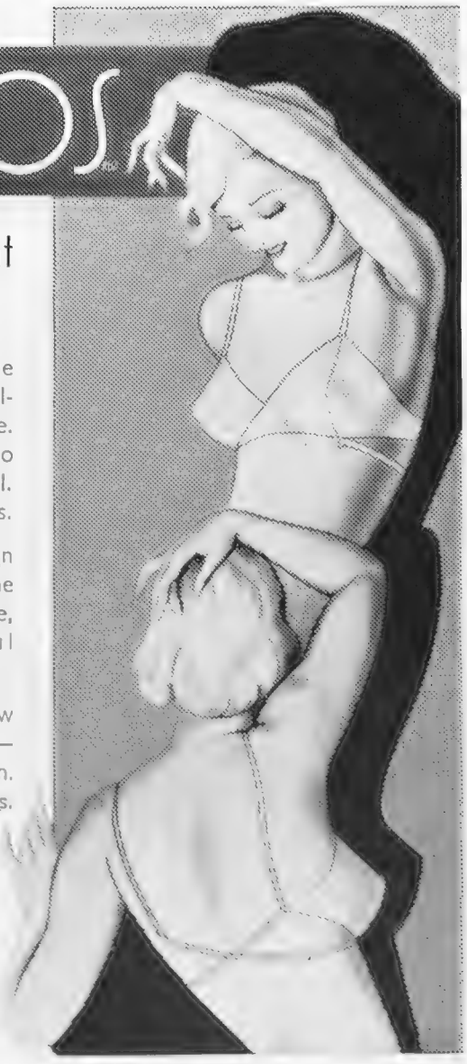

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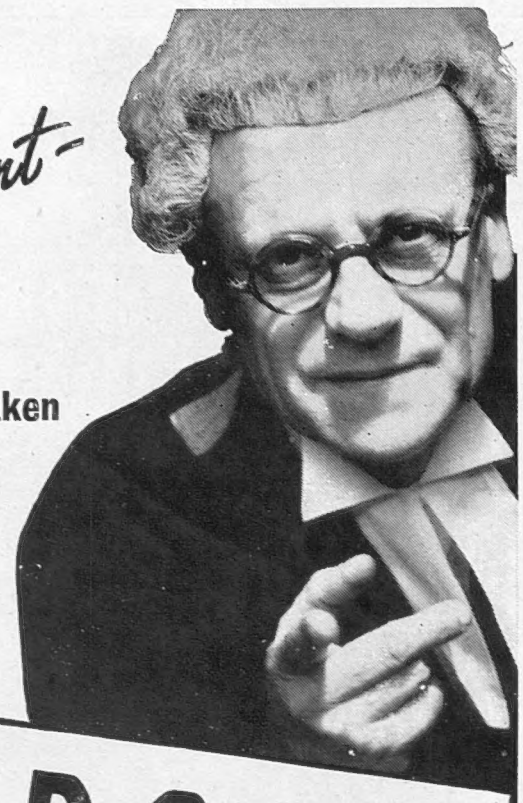

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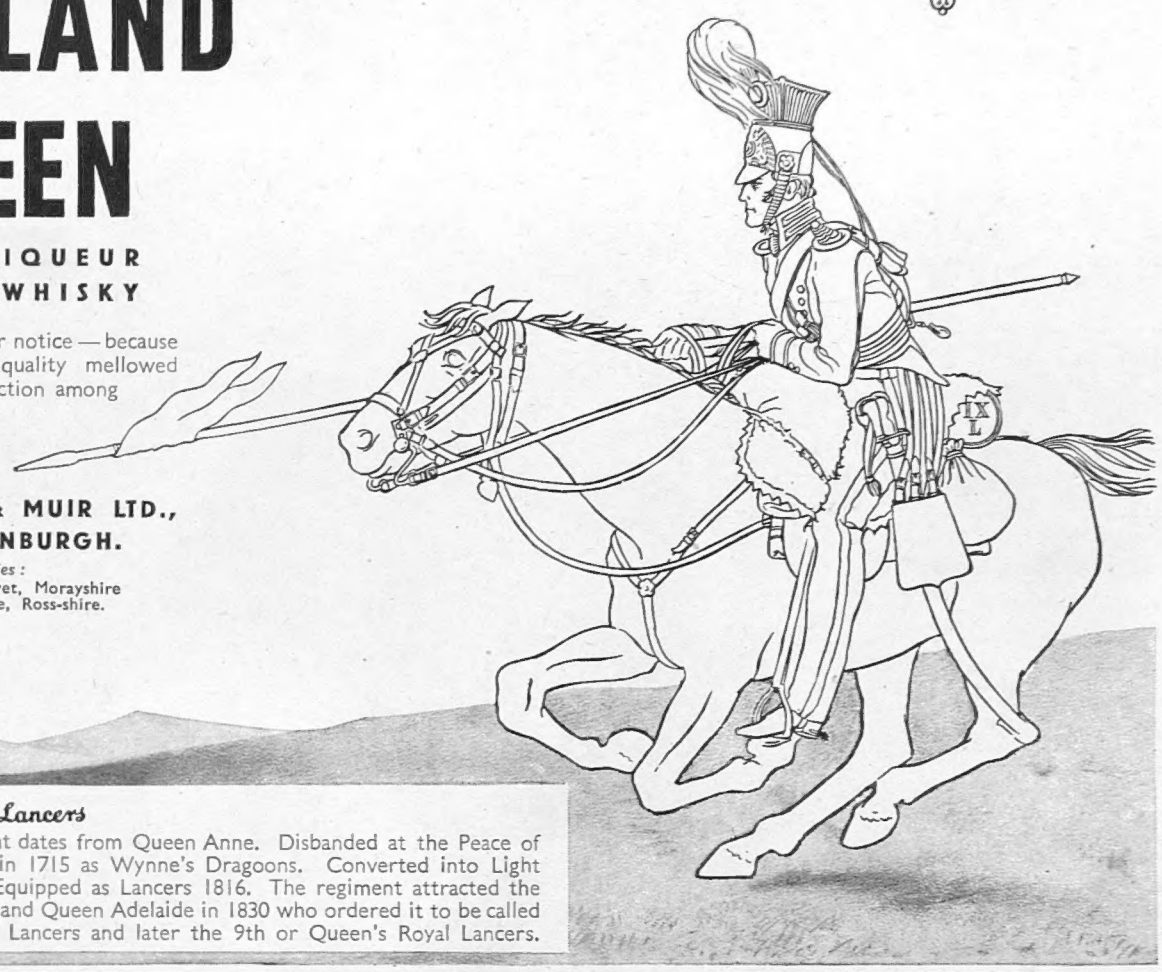

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